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Pluralistic Ignorance in a Prison Community

by

Jana Marie Grekul

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts

Department of Sociology

Edmonton, Alberta

Fall, 1995

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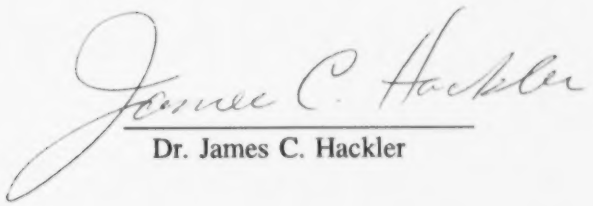

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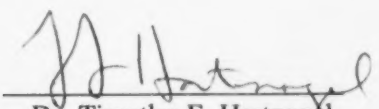

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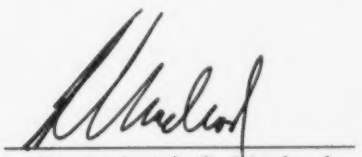

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Abstract

Pluralistic ignorance refers to the shared cognitive error of a group: members of a group often make the same errors in perceptions resulting in a group attitude that is inaccurate. If the group is influenced by one or more vocal, visible leaders, the attitudes or opinions espoused by these leaders becomes the publicly acknowledged 'group attitude'. It may be however, that individual group members privately disagree with this public attitude but are unwilling to express their true, private attitudes.

In an effort to test whether pluralistic ignorance exists among inmates and correctional officers in a maximum security prison, private attitudes and perceptions of those attitudes were measured. Members of the inmate group and the officer group were asked to indicate their private responses to hypothetical situations and were asked to estimate the group attitude of their respective group and the other group. The results support the findings of research in this area: pluralistic ignorance appears to exist among and between inmates and correctional officers in a correctional facility. A similar study conducted in the United States found that inmates were more inaccurate and negative in their misperception of attitudes. The present study, however, is different in that correctional officers in this study were in general more inaccurate and negative in their misperceptions of both inmate and staff attitudes.

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I would like to acknowledge the inmates and officers who put a great deal on the line by participating in this study; it is they who made the study possible. The impact they and their situations have made on me will remain forever vivid. This study would not have been possible without my supervisor, Dr. Jim Hackler, who suggested the project, and provided invaluable advice and support, and never-ending encouragement. I believe he went beyond the call of duty to help me throughout the program, and to provide me with opportunities and experiences which I could not have gained otherwise. I would like to acknowledge the support of Dr. Tim Hartnagel and Dr. Rod Macleod, the members of my committee. Thank-you to Jennifer Bell and Jo Lamba for always understanding. To my parents, Marshall and Gloria Grekul, thank-you for all you are and all you do, thank-you for instilling in me the value and appreciation for life-long learning, and for your unconditional love. To Lisa and Chad, you are the best ones. To Marcel, thank-you for your love, your support, your understanding, and your endless giving.

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CHAPTER 1: WHAT IS PLURALISTIC IGNORANCE?

As part of group interaction, people often try to anticipate the attitudes and opinions of others. However, they sometimes misperceive those attitudes and opinions. If they are sensitive to, or influenced by the views of others, particularly those with power or influence, individuals may be hesitant to express their true feelings. They may remain silent or express views that they believe will be acceptable to others. As a result, group interaction can lead to heightened misperceptions or pluralistic ignorance. While this process is a factor in all social settings, it may have important ramifications for prison situations. In prisons, both the environment and antisocial inmate leaders might influence or intimidate inmates and cause them to repress their attitudes and opinions. Simultaneously, as these private attitudes are repressed, certain 'group attitudes' are promoted. These group attitudes, espousing antisocial, anti-staff values and behaviours, are likely to contribute to the hostile climate and tense atmosphere characteristic of many prison communities.

What is pluralistic ignorance? Merton defines pluralistic ignorance as *any uncertainty about the distribution of opinion in a reference group* (Merton, 1968; Taylor, 1982: 312). More specifically, pluralistic ignorance refers to the powerful influence of social projection within groups (O'Gorman, 1986: 337). It comprises the shared false ideas individuals have about the sentiments, thoughts, and behaviour of others. The actual opinions of people do not always influence others directly. Direct communication or interaction may not be possible (Taylor, 1982: 313); groups may be too large, or communication and interaction awkward. In an effort to make sense of their social environment (ie. the group of which they are a part), individuals may make inferences about the attitudes and beliefs of people around them. They often make erroneous inferences. When errors occur systematically, in predictable directions, and involve a group of people, the result is pluralistic ignorance (Fields and Schuman, 1976: 427).

Pluralistic ignorance refers to "socially accepted but false propositions about the social world" (O'Gorman, 1986: 333). It refers to the shared cognitive error of a group; the members of a group make the same errors in perceptions resulting in a group attitude that is inaccurate. Pluralistic ignorance is a "necessary condition/cognitive element in stereotypes, ethnocentrism, false consciousness, self-fulfilling prophecies, and ideologies" (O'Gorman, 1986: 333). Essentially, there is a difference between the ways **individuals** process information, and the way this information is processed by the **group**.

Individuals can be misled by the perception they have of a group. The group, especially if influenced by vocal, visible leaders, can lead its members into submitting to imaginary group standards. Because of an attitude of social conformity, the belief that individuals must conform to the expectations of others, individuals often distort their personal beliefs and judgments in an attempt to defer to imagined group

standards (O'Gorman, 1986: 337).

These imagined group standards may differ considerably from the private attitudes of the group members. In situations where pluralistic ignorance exists, the attitudes individuals hold privately, or their true feelings, are ignored in favour of supporting the apparent group leader, who seemingly represents the beliefs of the entire group. Individual group members do not consider the possibility that many more of them share their 'true' feelings than share those expressed by prominent group leaders. For example, Schanck, an early researcher in this area, in conducting a study among religious groups, found that "group members, unaware of the private attitudes of other members, falsely concluded that their own private views were not widely shared" (cited in O'Gorman, 1986: 341). Individuals were unwilling to express their true feelings, which contradicted the dictates of the church. They did not realize that fellow churchgoing members felt the same way they did about church dogma, and were also publicly supporting the rules while privately rejecting them.

The influence of vocal group leaders. In these types of situations, the attitudes with visible and highly vocal adherents appear to be more widely held than they actually are. Glynn and McLeod, in their study on public opinion, found there existed a group of "hardcore" opinion leaders who were not prepared to conform, to change their opinions, or even to be silent in the face of public opinion (1984: 732). Similarly, Toch and Klofas refer to "Subculture Custodians" who "can disproportionately influence because they are most consistent in their views, care more deeply about their beliefs, feel more certain of support and are themselves immune to influence" (1984: 153). It is not hard to see how such vocal, persistent, and influential leaders can persuade a group of people that the attitudes they themselves are expressing are representative of the group. The resulting appearance of support, in effect, turns into a self-fulfilling prophecy; those who believe they are in the majority become louder and stronger in their convictions. They see themselves as representing the group, so less vocal group members do not reveal their own beliefs. The cycle continues, until the most vocal attitudes become acknowledged as, or are assumed to be, truly representative of the attitudes of all group members (Taylor, 1982: 311). Essentially, pluralistic ignorance involves a "situation when a minority position in public opinion is incorrectly perceived to be the majority position and vice versa" (Taylor, 1982: 312).

The spiral of silence. In situations where pluralistic ignorance exists, several processes may contribute to its occurrence. Noelle-Neumann refers to the spiral of silence as the process in attitude formation by which "the losing side falls increasingly silent and the winning side is therefore overrated" (1977: 143). This may explain how one perspective or attitude can appear to be dominant in group or public opinion. If an individual discovers that s/he agrees with the view of a vocal group leader, it boosts the individual's self-confidence and enables self-expression without the danger of social isolation (Taylor, 1982: 314). The effect is a spiralling process that establishes one view as the prevailing one: adherents to the opinion that appears to be gaining support will speak louder and more confidently. They will also be more willing and

likely to discuss their point of view with others (Glynn and McLeod, 1984: 731). Adherents to the view that seems to be losing ground will adopt a more reserved attitude when expressing their opinions in public. The result is that

> (a)n opinion that is being reinforced
> in this way appears stronger than it
> really is, while an opinion suppressed
> as described will seem to be weaker than
> it is in reality (Noelle-Neumann, 1977: 144)

This spiralling process contributes to misperception and often unintentional deception among members of a group or social environment. As Fields and Schuman found in their study, the level of pluralistic ignorance is highest for certain controversial issues where the liberal majority is uncertain and lacks confidence in the prevalence of its views (1976).

Looking-glass perception. The concept referred to as the **looking-glass perception** describes the tendency to believe others' opinions are the same as one's own (Fields and Schuman, 1976: 427). As the pluralistic ignorance becomes prevalent, the looking-glass perception further strengthens the position of these vocal individuals (ie. group leaders) by enabling them to look out into the group and (falsely) see their own opinion reflected back. This provides further "support" for their ideas and strengthens their apparent leadership. These leaders are usually conservative in their views and it is the 'liberal' (more progressive) majority who remain silent. It is precisely these liberals who show less tendency to perceive others in agreement with themselves (Fields and Schuman, 1976: 445). Thus, the looking-glass perception appears to be more characteristic of the vocal leaders in the group. This process is a contributing factor to the maintenance of pluralistic ignorance, a situation, according to Fields and Schuman, "where people appear to operate within a 'false' social world or at least one quite different from that observed by the presumably objective social scientist" (1976: 427).

Fear of isolation. It is through social interaction that people influence the willingness of others to express opinions. Because people like to be popular and respected, they will try to discover which opinions and modes of behaviour are prevalent. They will express themselves and exhibit behaviour accordingly in public (Noelle-Neumann, 1977: 144). When individuals see their own opinion spreading they voice it more frequently. Individuals who disagree personally may support the 'popular' opinion publicly to gain approval and support from their social environment. The threat of isolation for holding an attitude contrary to popular opinion is exhibited in Noelle-Neumann's study. She found support for the hypothesis that smokers who uphold the right to smoke in the presence of nonsmokers are more likely to keep silent when the majority of people around them are nonsmokers (Noelle-Neumann, 1977: 155).

Incentives to expression. Taylor claims that rather than social isolation being the motivating force in self-expression, it is more the incentives and expected benefits arising from self-expression under certain circumstances that are the determining factors in the expression of attitudes, whether personal attitudes or public attitudes (Taylor, 1982: 333). For example, those who think they are in the minority have an extra incentive to remain silent or in other instances it may be beneficial to publicly claim support for the 'majority' position, even if they privately do not agree. Taylor specifically looked at these "incentives" to expression in the arena of politics.

The importance of inhibition in the expression of attitudes. The numerous assumptions about how others feel, which are the backbone of pluralistic ignorance, are self-perpetuating precisely because they discourage the expression of opinions that one falsely regards as unsupported (Taylor, 1982; Toch, 1984). As Toch and Klofas write, "pluralistic ignorance inhibits conduct,... it squelches the private preferences and sound inclinations of a majority-in-ignorance" (Toch, 1984: 130). Katz and Allport conducted one of the earlier pluralistic ignorance studies with students at Syracuse University. They discovered that although 55% of students had no personal objection to social contact with several different "types" of people, these same students admitted that they would publicly discriminate against twenty-six of the thirty types because association with them, they felt, would lower the reputation of their fraternity (Toch, 1984: 129). A similar study was done among delinquents; their personal feelings indicated less approval of antisocial behaviour than did the public attitudes and perceptions they held (Toch, 1984:135). For delinquents

> pluralistic ignorance acquires survival-related overtones. One knows oneself to be - or suspects oneself of being - tender-minded, naive, vulnerable,and pro-social. One evolves a "tough" facade to avoid being ridiculed (Toch, 1984: 136).

According to the theory of pluralistic ignorance, a clear minority of one's delinquent peers are truly tough; the others, like the person himself are "facade-tough" (Toch, 1984: 136).

Similarly, there exists a teacher subculture which espouses strictness and firmness with students. Yet it has been found that teachers perceive this strict, aloof control ideology of their colleagues to be more removed from students than their own personal beliefs indicate (Toch, 1984: 136).

In all of these examples,

> As a result of the feeling that this projected attitude is universal among the group members,the individual may then desire to conform to the

> group standard and adopt the projected attitude himself (Toch, 1984; 130).

Pluralistic ignorance contributes to a situation where an entire group may maintain a public position completely different from the private attitudes of the group members. The illusion that results is fuelled by acts of omission and commission. The omission is that a silent, often progressive (supportive of reforms), *majority* is too intimidated and misled to voice their beliefs. The commission is the perpetuation of falsely supported attitudes by a self-appointed, often conservative (interested in maintaining the status quo), minority of spokespersons who pretend to be representative of the views of the majority (Toch, 1984: 139).

Research on pluralistic ignorance, the spiral of silence and vocal group leaders. Many studies focusing on these processes and concepts have been conducted (Toch and Klofas, 1984; Noelle-Neumann, 1977; Singer and Singer, 1985; Glynn and McLeod, 1984; Ross et al., 1977; Taylor, 1982; O'Gorman, 1986; Fields and Schuman, 1976; Schanck, 1932; Wallen, 1943; Glynn, 1989; Korte, 1972). Glynn and McLeod found support for the "relative independence of perception of opinion judgments from own preferences" (Glynn and McLeod, 1984: 731). In studying the attitudes and behaviour of people regarding politics, they discovered that individuals who see their own political opinions spreading will voice these opinions self-confidently in public. Similarly, respondents were more likely to say they would enter into a political discussion with someone whose attitude is congruent with their own. They also found that individuals who see a candidate as winning an election are more likely to express a preference for that candidate. Group opinion is subject to different processes of perception and is often not an accurate representation of the individual opinions of its members. Glynn and McLeod conclude that perception of the opinions of others may have a very powerful influence on the expression of one's own opinion and on one's actual behaviour (Glynn and McLeod, 1984: 740). These findings all indicate support for the pluralistic-ignorance producing processes discussed earlier.

Korte studied pluralistic ignorance about student radicalism (1972). He found that in his sample of college students there existed a "radical bias" in the estimation of other students' opinions. Essentially the students overestimated the extent to which other students in their community would endorse the "radical position" on several issues. Furthermore, the students thought themselves personally to be more conservative and traditional relative to the peer group norm than they actually were. Korte explains the over-estimation of radical support by claiming that "the side of an issue representing a cultural (or subcultural) value is more prominent, and is more frequently and loudly advocated by adherents", simply because it is more extreme and visible (1972: 586). If the position becomes regarded as dominant, those who support it will be vocal and those opposed will remain silent. The result is an exaggerated impression of the aggregate group attitude. The result is pluralistic ignorance.

In a similar vein, Taylor measured private and public attitudes regarding air pollution, water pollution, and nuclear energy and found evidence of high pluralistic

ignorance: less than 50% of respondents accurately perceived the majority position regarding each area (Taylor, 1982: 319). On each issue those respondents whose private attitudes represented a minority position believed they were actually in the majority and the majority perceived they were a minority (Taylor, 1982: 330).

The contribution of pluralistic ignorance to subculture production. Pluralistic ignorance often results in the formation of clearly defined, although falsely based, presumed majority opinions and beliefs. The resulting group can become subcultural in nature, characterized by attitudes and behaviours unique to the group that are clearly different from the larger group or society of which it is a part. Often these groups develop in reaction to certain aspects of the larger society; for example, as described above, subcultures contrary to majority thinking form in response to pluralistic ignorance based processes. In one situation, juveniles, in an effort to avoid ridicule by peers, conceal their private pro-social attitudes and follow the lead of anti-social delinquent 'leaders'. The result is a group known for their anti-social attitudes and behaviour: a delinquent subculture. In the second example, teachers, who privately may be more pro-student, succumb to the stricter attitudes of their visible, vocal peers. The result: a teacher subculture evolves characterized by its custodial beliefs, despite the private beliefs of its members.

Interaction of subcultures. The case for pluralistic ignorance becomes particularly interesting and significant when two pluralistic ignorance-influenced subcultures interact. Prisons provide one example of the intersection of two such subcultures influenced by pluralistic ignorance: inmates on the one hand and prison guards on the other. While inmates and prison guards will normally be at odds because of the prison situation, if each group develops a subculture emphasizing extreme negative views of the other reinforced by pluralistic ignorance, the normal potential for conflict can be heightened considerably. The prison situation may be characterized by a dialectic of pluralistic ignorance in which the inmate group "play-acts 'resistant' clients", and the prison guards "play-act custodially oriented staff"; the end-product may be pressure toward conflict (Toch, 1984: 140). Members of both groups are 'play-acting' because these 'roles' are based on inaccurate perceptions. Inmates learn to follow 'rules' which prescribe behaviour that is recalcitrant and distrustful of staff members. Staff develop impressions of inmates as lazy, sly, and unworthy of their trust or help. The 'actors' get caught up in the hype created by the few visible 'subculture custodians' who thrive on this conflict; they are unable to see through the stereotypes and misperceptions. The oppositional nature of these roles and stereotypes contributes to a spiralling process of misunderstandings and antagonistic feelings and beliefs. This stereotyping results in divisions and hostilities between the groups operating under these misconceptions. Such systematic inaccuracy in estimates of group opinion by members of a group lead to perhaps unnecessary problems and conflicts within society in general and in institutions within the society. Correctional institutions and prisons are characterized by much conflict that may be influenced in part by the types of processes described above.

This study will attempt to measure pluralistic ignorance in a Canadian maximum security prison and see if it can be used to attempt to describe processes surrounding the poor morale and unrest that characterized the institution in 1993 and 1994. Before turning to the study itself, Chapter 2 notes some of the characteristics of prisons and why they are particularly susceptible to the stresses arising out of pluralistic ignorance.

CHAPTER 2
THE PRISON: AN INSTITUTION RIPE FOR PLURALISTIC IGNORANCE

THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF THE PRISON

The prison is an institution that lends itself well to conflict and confrontation between the populations of which it is composed. From the processes and procedures surrounding entrance and initiation to the prison, to the day-to-day running of the institution, to the way the prison is organized, miscommunication, conflict, and violence seem to flow naturally from the set of circumstances which both inmates and staff members find themselves in. This chapter aims to outline some of the processes, procedures, and situations within the prison environment that contribute to the misunderstandings, misperceptions, and miscommunications that may eventually lead to violent situations. This chapter, in other words, attempts to explain how and why prison communities may experience pluralistic ignorance and the problems that may result from pluralistic ignorance-producing processes.

The prison as a total institution

Goffman has described the characteristics of total institutions and the effects these places have on their clients. Within total institutions, "all aspects of life are conducted in the same place. under the same single authority, in the immediate company of a large number of others" (Goffman, 1961). Everyone is generally treated alike; they participate in the same activities and are subject to an enforced schedule. Essentially, total institutions are responsible for the "handling of many human needs by the bureaucratic organization of whole blocks of people". The prison is an example of a total institution (Goffman, 1961: 18).

Entrance. One of the most significant aspects of a total institution is the process surrounding entrance into the institution. As Goffman states, "upon entrance, the inmate is stripped of support and the conception of self from the home world" (Goffman, 1961: 23). A mortification process occurs during admittance to the institution and during the initial phases of institutional life. For example, role dispossession occurs; the inmate experiences a deep break with the roles he participated in in the past. The admission procedures themselves are mortifying; the inmate is reshaped and transformed into the submissive, obedient subject the administration believes is desirable. The "obedience test" and "will-breaking contest" are both methods of singling out defiant inmates and punishing them visibly and immediately to set an example for others in the institution (Goffman, 1961: 23). The implications of processes such as these for pluralistic ignorance are that as a result of the entrance procedures, the inmate becomes essentially a blank slate. He is ready to be shaped into the type of person desired by the institution. However, in the process of doing this, he becomes easily susceptible to the influence of vocal and visible inmates who have already established themselves as leaders in the general population. It is easier for him to identify with others who are in the same position as he finds himself than it is to identify with the staff and administrators who are essentially

'those guys' who have put him in the institution. Eager to search for and find a new identity for their new lives, inmates turn to these influential inmates, who appear to have adjusted to life as an inmate, as role models after which to model their own behaviour in order to survive. Essentially, because of these initial intimidating and will-breaking procedures, the inmate makes a break with society and more easily succumbs to the leaders and processes within the inmate population that contribute to the production and maintenance of pluralistic ignorance.

Initiation. Once admitted to the institutional population, the inmate undergoes an "initiation": he is the lowest in status among the inmates (a "fish"), he has no property, and he is subject to searches and other physical indignations and humiliations. Inmates in total institutions are forced to take on a disidentifying role. They must now participate in a daily routine of life that is alien to them. Inmates are also forced to experience what Goffman calls contaminative exposure. Facts about an inmate's past experiences, behaviours, and statuses are collected and recorded in a file that is available to staff, who are encouraged to read and acquire this information. Furthermore, the inmate's life is devoid of privacy. He cannot prevent other inmates and visitors especially, from seeing him in humiliating circumstances. He is forced into interpersonal relations and social contact with other inmates about whom he knows nothing. He is forced into group confessions with new audiences when he participates in therapy programs. His life is now open to everyone, staff and inmates alike. His business becomes everyone's business (Goffman, 1961: 31). In terms of pluralistic ignorance, these bureaucratic and 'therapeutic' procedures carried out by staff members contribute to the creation of an inmate population vulnerable to the influence of vocal, visible, extreme leader inmates. The inmate is essentially at the mercy of staff members and other inmates, who suddenly know everything about him, and who know how alone and vulnerable he is feeling in his new role as an inmate. Again, the new inmate, in searching for some sort of model for survival, might turn to the already established inmates, who may appear to be more than willing to 'help' a fellow inmate. In turning to their new-found inmate 'friends' who seem to 'know the ropes' and have the system figured out, these rookie inmates are taking the first step in what will become pluralistic ignorance producing processes.

Also important in the creation of a submissive inmate population is the removal of individual autonomy. Activities are subject to regulations and judgment by the staff. Inmates are required to request permission or supplies for minor activities that are executed independently on the outside, for example smoking, shaving, and mailing letters. As Goffman puts it, the "autonomy of the act itself is violated" (Goffman, 1961: 41). The inmate becomes dependent on others, who control these activities for him. Initially, the new inmate is dependent on both staff and established inmates. Eventually, the inmate may become more independent of other inmates, but he remains dependent on staff throughout his sentence. Essentially, an adult is forced into an "unnatural" submissive role (Goffman, 1961: 41). To exacerbate this childlike treatment of adults, it is also common for inmates to be ignored or spoken to like children. As well, any staff member has the right to discipline any inmate. This increases the probability of sanctions being levelled against inmates. All of these factors contribute to the tendency for inmates and staff to conceive of each other in terms of narrow, hostile stereotypes. Often the result is

the development of two distinct factions within the institution: the formal, administrative organization, and the informal inmate organization that develops alongside and in response to the official organization. Both are influential and crucial to the functioning of the institution, and each depends on the other for its existence and character.

The prison community

The prison is a service organization for maintaining order. Within the prison there is a ruling caste and a subordinate caste, but neither assumes any moral obligation to the other. Inmates are not morally obligated to obey administrative demands; staff are not morally obligated to treat inmates with respect. (Grosser, 1960: 130; Sykes, 1958). As 'keeper' and 'kept' each group owes nothing to the other by the very nature of their relationship. Thus the potential for misunderstandings and conflict. Because the prison is noncompetitive with other institutions in society (no other organization directly challenges the prison by offering services comparable to it), it doesn't need to maintain competitive standards, adapt technologically, or respond to market fluctuations. In this sense, prison management is free, to a certain extent, from public scrutiny.

Clemmer, in his classic work The Prison Community (1940), describes the prison as a social microcosm. The prison has a culture, "that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (1940: 85). As Clemmer points out, prison culture is "not distinct or even greatly different from the culture in free society" (1940: 85). In fact, the inmates' culture previous to incarceration has an important influence on the culture behind the prison walls. These "culture antecedents" provide a link with free society, making the prison culture merely a modification of the culture of free society (1940: 6).

Weinberg, in discussing aspects of the prison's social structure, claims that the attitudes expressed in prison are continuations of cultural conflicts antecedent to incarceration (1942: 717). For example, on the outside the individuals who are now in prison were in conflict with the police and other law-enforcing agencies. Inside prison, the conflicts that occur continue to be between these individuals, now inmates, and a law-enforcing agency, the correctional officers and administration. As on the outside, both groups conceive of the other in hostile and collective stereotypes: "staff depict inmates in negative anti-thesis to themselves; inmates contradict and nullify the ideology of the officials" (Weinberg, 1942: 717). The conflict is a continuation from a similar one on the outside.

According to Weinberg, the guard group uses "contrast-conception" which defines the inmate group in negative polarity to itself. Many of the officials see inmates as "criminals after all", "people who can't and shouldn't be trusted", "degenerates who must be put in their place at all times", who cannot be rehabilitated, and are unintelligent, lazy, outcasts of society (1942: 721). Naturally, most of the inmates perceive the situation differently. They see themselves as being no different from any man on the street. "They consider officials as 'economic failures' who couldn't get a job on the outside" (Weinberg, 1942: 722). In their view, society is responsible for crime; they themselves are "victims of society". The "real crooks" are the financiers, the white collar criminals, who are almost never arrested (Weinberg, 1942: 722).

Weinberg's point is that "conflict between criminals and law-enforcing groups persists in prison despite the formal administrative set-up" (Weinberg, 1942: 725). Although some inmates have neutral or even friendly attitudes toward certain officials, and some officials pick favourite inmates, the stereotypes held by the two groups are beyond the power of individuals to control or modify. Furthermore, individuals who do not conform to group representations are considered variants and subject to the controls and pressures of their respective stratum (ie. officers or inmates) (Weinberg, 1942: 726). Inmate-friendly officers and officer-friendly inmates often run the risk of being ostracized from their own respective groups. Pressure is great to conform to the prevailing view of the group of which one is a member.

Subculture creation

Subcultures often form in response to some problem faced by a group (Becker and Geer, 1960: 305). The subculture provides a solution to the problem and then may develop into a more general response to a situation. The creation of a subculture may initially be a response to an issue. Eventually it becomes useful in addressing more and more issues, until finally it becomes an established world view. The subculture thus provides a recipe or interpretation of the world for its members.

A subculture may be formed on the basis of feelings of anger, frustration, and bitterness toward the dominant society. Criminals, inmates, and delinquents live according to the dictates of their respective subcultures. Yet, these 'deviants' never completely repudiate the norms of conventional society. The conventional standards for behaviour in fact linger on, repressed but still a threat to one's commitment to the subculture (Cohen, 1955: 132). According to Cohen,

> there is much evidence from clinical psychology
> that moral norms, once effectively internalized,
> are not lightly thrust aside or extinguished. If
> a new moral order is evolved which offers
> a more satisfactory solution to one's life problems,
> the old order usually continues to press for
> recognition...(1955: 133).

This constant threat to the individual's 'new-found' beliefs is addressed through reaction-formation (Cohen, 1955: 133). Reaction-formation refers to an exaggerated response to a stimulus. The purpose of this 'over-reaction' is to reassure the individual "against an *inner* threat to his defenses as well as the function of meeting an external situation on its own terms" (Cohen, 1955: 133). So, in an effort to successfully reject dominant society, the 'deviant' overcompensates the tendency to revert back to the norms of conventional society by responding in an exaggerated way to that society and its norms. In the case of Cohen's delinquents, reaction-formation takes "the form of an 'irrational', 'malicious', 'unaccountable' hostility to the enemy...the norms of the respectable middle-class society" (Cohen, 1955: 133). For inmates, the inmate social system represents their own form of reaction-formation to the guards and administrators, and to conventional society. Inmates

and delinquents are able to reject their rejectors while simultaneously turning to their own new group for status, respect and recognition.

Much has been written on the inmate subculture, its formation and maintenance, and its role in prison conflicts (Atchley and McCabe, 1968; Bowker, 1980; Clemmer, 1938; Ellis, 1974; Gaes, 1985; O'Gorman, 1986; Scharf, 1983; Sykes, 1958; Sylvester, 1977; Toch, 1984; Toch, 1989; Wheeler, 1961; Wheeler, 1961). Many variables have been studied as possible influences on prison conflict. For example crowding, age, institutional experience, time incarcerated, coping skills, facilities provided and classification procedures have all been suggested as possible influences on prison violence (Ellis, 1974; Gaes, 1985; Porporino, 1986; Scharf, 1983; Zamble, 1990). Underlying many of these potential influences however, is the existence of an inmate subculture in conflict with a correctional officer subculture (Duffee, 1974; Cheatwood, 1974; Kauffman, 1981; Klofas, 1982; Toch, 1982; Wheeler, 1961).

Within correctional institutions, subcultural groups in conflict can be particularly dangerous. Prisons are the homes of often violent individuals lacking in effective coping and communication skills (Porporino, 1986; Zamble, 1990). More importantly, these individuals do not want to be in prison. Incarceration is involuntary. As a result, the potential exists for uncooperative, recalcitrant, and antagonistic behaviour toward staff and each other: a population being kept against its will is likely to be rebellious. In prison, a subculture exists that is the result of incarceration and the deprivations and limitations on freedom that are part of it. Certain patterns of behaviour, methods of gaining influence, and roles develop in response to the frustrations experienced by inmates. The total of these behaviours, roles, and rules forms the inmate subculture (Irwin and Cressey, 1962; 147).

The inmate subculture

The following discussion is based on what has been written on the inmate subculture. However, if pluralistic ignorance does in fact exist within the inmate population, the implications for subcultural theory may be significant. If inmates are only paying public lip service to the inmate subculture, while privately maintaining their pro-social beliefs, what does this say about the subculture? The subculture itself may essentially be composed of illusory beliefs, people saying one thing publicly, while believing the opposite. The inmate subculture may be composed of false beliefs - public beliefs that inaccurately represent the actual private attitudes of its members. So it may not be a subculture at all. Or more accurately, it may be a "pretend" subculture.

Sykes and Messinger (1960) point to the deprivations and frustrations experienced by inmates as a result of their confinement as the major cause of subculture formation. Being isolated from the free community, rejected by society, and living under the extensive social control of custodians, all contribute to psychological pain - not the least of which is an attack on the inmate's self-image, sense of worth, and self-esteem. The presence of other individuals experiencing the same enforced dependence and loss of autonomy results in a feeling of solidarity. (This is compounded by the fact that they are all imprisoned criminals: self-protection becomes another issue that must be addressed.) All of these conditions together form a harsh social reality that must be dealt with if

inmates are to survive physically and emotionally.

> A cohesive inmate society provides the prisoner with a meaningful social group with which he can identify himself and which will support him in his struggles against his condemners (Sykes and Messinger, 1960: 16).

According to Sykes and Messinger, imprisoned inmates adapt to the situation by developing and adhering to the rules of the *inmate code*, which is the backbone of the inmate subculture. Inmate solidarity helps solve the problem of personal security and relieves to some extent the pains, frustrations, and deprivations of imprisonment.

According to Clemmer, the unwritten code of prisoners "results from an attitudinal configuration that a minority group to exist must have cohesiveness and be secure within itself" (Clemmer, 1940: 152). This is essentially a form of reaction formation. A minority group or subculture must have a strong raison d'etre and must adequately address the issues faced by its members. The inmate code prescribes appropriate behaviour for its members so that one knows what is expected of him. In this way the inmate code provides cohesiveness to the inmate group. Part of the strength of the inmate code comes from its being formed in response to prison staff. It is able to keep inmates united by pitting them against their 'common enemy' and uniting them in their hatred for the guards. If there wasn't an inmate subculture with mores and norms prescribing appropriate behaviour and attitudes, inmates would be disorganized and constantly in conflict (Clemmer, 1940: 153).

Goffman refers to a fraternalization process that occurs among inmates, whereby their sense of common injustice and bitterness against the outside world tends to develop (Goffman, 1961: 54). The inmate social system that results enables the inmate to reject his rejectors rather than himself. As Sykes says, "somehow the imprisoned criminal must find a device for rejecting his rejectors, if he is to endure psychologically" (Sykes, 1958: 67). The inmate social system fills this need.

The inmate social system and code for behaviour provide a form of informal social control and a means of social typing for inmates. The system is hierarchical and has a strict "code of ethics" which dictates the behaviour and attitudes of its members. The system has developed in response to a need. After all, as one inmate was quoted as saying, "the worst thing about prison is you have to live with other prisoners" (Sykes, 1958: 77). Not only does the inmate social system address the loss of security felt by inmates but it also serves as a means of restoring status to its members. The inmate culture is "a system of social relationships governed by norms that are largely at odds with those espoused by the officials and the conventional society" (Cloward, 1960: 21). Not only can an inmate reject his rejectors, but he can also seek and gain prestige within the inmate system.

The functional or indigenous influence model

The functional, or the indigenous influence model, as it is sometimes referred to, is based on this view of inmate society. The inmate social system is functional for inmates - it helps them to adapt to and survive in prison. Clemmer refers to the prisonization process, whereby inmates in a prison take on in greater or less degree the folkways, mores, customs, and general culture of the institution (1940: 299). He likens the process to assimilation. It is the situational factors of imprisonment that result in the development of the inmate subculture. The inmate subculture is an organized and collective response to the problems characteristic of imprisonment. In fact, the inmate social organization is viewed as a functional adaptation to the prison situation that gives inmates a mechanism for controlling their environment, meeting their needs, and maintaining their self-dignity (Sykes and Messinger, 1960; Wheeler, 1961; Tittle and Tittle, 1964; Akers et al, 1976; Akers et al, 1977). The implications of the functional model for pluralistic ignorance are that the structural features of prisons may be so bad that certain behaviours result among inmates. It may be the structural features of prison life that encourage or force inmates to turn to vocal and visible inmate leaders as a response to the conditions of prison life, thus denying their true personal beliefs in order to survive.

Tittle and Tittle conducted a study designed to show whether the prison code helps inmates to overcome their deprivations. They also tested whether inmate ties to the outside community and inmate expectations of possible rehabilitation affect the solidarity of the inmate group (Tittle and Tittle, 1964: 216). Their results indicate support for the functional model: the prison code is a product of institutional life and not merely a reflection of a general value system associated with criminal activity. They also found "strong unqualified support" for the hypothesis that the pains of imprisonment will decrease with greater integration into the inmate social organization. However, the theory of pluralistic ignorance implies that inmates are not truly integrated into the inmate social organization, rather they still hold onto their pro-social values and beliefs. Tittle and Tittle found that for inmates who desire the friendship of peers but who also want to conform to staff expectations (ie. favour rehabilitation), the deciding factor is their attachment to friends and relatives on the outside. This, in turn, weakens the solidarity of inmate social organization (Tittle and Tittle, 1964: 221).

Wheeler's study "Socialization in Correctional Communities" traces changes in inmates over the duration of their sentence (Wheeler, 1961). Wheeler confirmed Clemmer's finding that the first few months of incarceration are particularly important in the socialization/prisonization process. As the length of time inmates are exposed to prisonization increases (i.e. the longer they are incarcerated), there is a reduction in the proportion of inmates who conform to staff expectations: with time, inmates become more prisonized. The mortification processes described by Goffman take their toll on the new inmates. The inmates' isolation and rejection from society, and the alien, dehumanizing procedures they experience during this phase, make the inmate subculture look inviting.

The study found some general support for the functional model, concluding that imprisonment impacts on an offender's self-conception by encouraging the inmate to reject

society and accept a conception of himself as being a criminal. In fact, Wheeler claims that the crucial condition giving rise to the inmate value system is the fact that it helps restore the inmate's self-esteem: he can reject his rejectors, rather than himself (Wheeler, 1961: 710). In terms of pluralistic ignorance, it may be that the inmate turns to vocal extreme inmate leaders to help restore his self-image even if it means denying his true, private, pro-social feelings and beliefs.

The importation model

Proponents of the importation model, or cultural drift model, claim that too much emphasis has been placed on situational factors in the prison, and not enough emphasis has been placed on the individual background characteristics inmates bring to the prison. Any variation in prisoner perspectives between institutions or between groups within institutions is based more on the degree of criminality of the particular inmate population found in those institutions than on the differences in structure between them (Schwartz, 1971: 532). The importation model claims that the "inmate system is reflective primarily of the criminal roles played and values acquired by inmates on the outside and brought into the institution with them" (Akers et al., 1974: 410). In other words, individuals who were criminal on the outside share this criminal identity on the inside. This 'imported' criminal culture influences the development of the inmate culture within prison. Inmates may experience group misperceptions on the outside, in the countless other groups which they belong to. This may make them more readily succumb to the group processes within the prison. Combined with the prison environment, which lends itself to a lack of communication, the likelihood is high for both pluralistic ignorance to exist and for it to cause increased problems for members of the prison community.

Thomas and Foster conducted an empirical test of the importation model (1973). In their analysis they look at such extraprison variables as social class, preprison involvement in crime, frequency of contacts with individuals in free society and the quality of inmate perceptions of post-prison life chances. It is their argument that the mere presence of common problems does not provide a logical explanation for the development of an inmate subculture. As with other importation theorists, they too claim that the identity-stripping processes Goffman refers to do not and cannot completely strip an individual of all pre-prison experiences and characteristics. These factors remain and continue to influence the inmate's life in prison.

Thomas and Foster claim that because of the similarity between the lower class subculture and the criminal subculture, these two subcultures may serve as latent cultural identities for inmates (Miller, 1987; Thomas and Foster, 1973). In other words, "because of latent cultural and social roles, inmates are viewed as arriving at prison with a high degree of receptivity to the expectations of particular social roles" (Thomas and Foster, 1973: 230). This tendency may be similar to that of delinquents in their delinquent subculture. Although they know they privately are more pro-social, they put on a facade of being tough and anti-social to impress fellow delinquents. Individuals who become inmates have likely experienced similar processes in their own delinquent or criminal groups. Essentially, their pre-prison experiences direct them to predictable social roles and therefore to predictable adaptations to imprisonment. These predictable adaptations are

a modification of the criminal code in the form of the inmate code.

In their research on prison inmate roles in five countries, Akers, Gruninger, and Hayner found that the extent of an inmate's prior criminality makes little difference for the roles inmates take on in a treatment institution. It does make a larger difference however, in custodial institutions, with the novice (first time incarcerated) taking on a pro-social role and a highly criminalized individual more likely to take on an anti-social role (Akers et al., 1976: 376). In other words, prior criminality affects the adaptation of an inmate to life in prison.

If this is in fact true, then it makes sense that pluralistic ignorance exists. Individuals do not completely shed their pre-prison identities. Pro-social beliefs and attitudes remain resulting in little change in basic beliefs. Even though individuals appear to support the vocal and visible members of their respective groups (inmate and correctional officer), their private belief system is little changed by the processes and procedures they experience. Similarly, they are susceptible to the same processes inside prison as they experienced on the outside. So instances of pluralistic ignorance such as the ones referred to by Schanck, Allport, and Noelle-Neumann more than likely were experienced by inmates when they were free citizens. If Thomas and Foster are correct in claiming that the "identity-stripping" processes experienced by inmates do not necessarily strip them of all prior experiences and beliefs, then it may also be correct to assume that in prison they are susceptible to the same processes they were susceptible to outside of prison. It may make more sense to combine the functional and importation approaches when attempting to explain pluralistic ignorance within the prison community. For example, while the prison environment produces a situation where inmates may be driven to follow visible, extreme leaders in their anti-social beliefs, it may also be that inmates are accustomed to similar processes occurring on the outside and thus more readily deny their own private beliefs in favour of publicly supporting the apparent group leader.

Integrating the two models. Some researchers have suggested that combining the functional and importation models will provide a more accurate understanding of the inmate subculture (Thomas, 1970; Akers et al., 1974). Combining them may also provide a clearer understanding of why pluralistic ignorance exists among inmates and guards and how it contributes to prison violence. Even Clemmer, though stressing the importance of structure and function in his prison analysis, recognized that cultural antecedents are important; the culture from which an inmate comes is a very important influence on his behaviour in prison (Clemmer, 1940: 6). Thomas points to isolation and shared deprivations in prison as a "fertile context for a contraculture to develop" (Thomas, 1970: 257). However, he attributes the content of this contraculture to the attitudes and values acquired in pre-prison socialization (Thomas, 1970: 257; Akers et al., 1974: 411).

The inmate code. The backbone of the inmate subculture is the inmate code - the unwritten rules guiding inmate behaviour in prison. This unwritten code results from the belief that for the inmate group to exist, it must have cohesiveness and be secure within itself. It must present a united front to the officials; it must be organized and have its own

guidelines for behaviour in order to survive. Becoming prisonized, and surviving in prison means learning and following this code for behaviour (Clemmer, 1940: 171).

In terms of pluralistic ignorance, the inmate code may actually be a mechanism set up by the inmate elite to help 'enforce' their beliefs in two ways. First of all, it is another way for them to spread their gospel and to attempt to convince the general population of inmates that their way of living behind bars is the only way to survive. Secondly, it contributes to the dichotomization of the inmate and guard groups and reduces any likelihood of guards and inmates actually communicating. This lack of communication increases the amount and degree of pluralistic ignorance and in turn facilitates conflict and violence between the groups. This in turn provides proof to the general inmate population that the leader inmates are correct in their representation of group opinion. And the cycle continues.

There are five major groups of tenets in the inmate code. They include the following:

1. Don't interfere with inmate interests - "Never rat on a con; be loyal to your class - the cons".

2. Don't lose your head - "play it cool"; "do your own time".

3. Don't exploit inmates - "inmates should share, not sell".

4. Don't weaken - inmates have dignity; a prisoner should be able to "take it"; and an inmate should show courage and "be a man".

5. Don't be a sucker - guards are hacks or screws and are to be treated with constant suspicion and distrust.

(Sykes and Messinger, 1960: 8)

In addition to these general "rules", inmates should not allow themselves to become committed to the values of hard work and submission to authority (Sykes and Messinger, 1960: 8). Essentially, these rules help to enforce inmate and guard misperceptions which increase the gap between inmates and guards. This helps maintain pluralistic ignorance.

Argot roles. Conformity or deviation from the inmate code is the primary basis for classifying and describing the relationships between and among inmates (Sykes and Messinger, 1960: 9). Social classes exist among inmates. An inmate's position in the prison hierarchy is determined primarily by the role he fills in the inmate culture. This is determined by degree of integration into the inmate hierarchy. Some inmates become fully integrated into the culture, some do not, and some remain on the border (Clemmer, 1940: 109). Reducing pluralistic ignorance might be achieved by focusing on certain inmate "types". Clarence Schrag has developed a typology describing the available positions within the inmate culture and the requirements these positions demand. There are four major inmate role types (Griffiths and Verdun-Jones, 1989: 404; Garabedian,

1964: 339; Schrag, 1961). The square John is pro-social in attitude and behaviour, is positive toward staff and administration, and is not involved in the inmate subculture. The right guy, who is anti-social, is deeply involved in the inmate subculture and is opposed to staff and administration. The con politician manipulates both staff and inmates to improve his own situation. His pseudo-social nature implies that he is neither allied with the anti-social right guy nor the pro-social square john. Rather, he drifts between the two types at his convenience. The outlaw is asocial and uses violence to victimize both staff and inmates. These role conceptualizations are assigned to a given inmate through a process of mutual agreement among the members of the prison population. The right guy, although anti-social, might be one inmate type that is amenable to change. His commitment and loyalty to the inmate subculture and to following the code implies that he acknowledges certain standards for appropriate behaviour. By targeting this group and by bringing them over to the pro-social side, we could be guaranteed to have a loyal, committed group of inmates. The pseudo-social inmates could also be targeted for change. They are committed to both the anti-social and the pro-social role type. By increasing the benefits of pro-social behaviour and by building on this commitment, we could attempt to reduce their anti-social behaviours.

The inmates may use labels different from these among themselves, but the behaviour described is the same. These classifications, and the prison argot that defines them, reflect the organization of the inmate social system. Through the use of the argot, interrelationships between the various inmate roles are defined. "The prisoner society, then, is conceptualized in terms of spontaneously emerging networks of social relationships structured around important institutional problems" (Garabedian, 1964: 340; Sykes, 1958: 85). Furthermore, a social role regulates behaviour within the institution, so that incumbents of a specific role type can be expected to act in the same way. As Garabedian concludes in his article,"...the role is a mechanism regulating conduct, contact, and communication within the inmate social system" (Garabedian, 1964: 347).

Inmate leaders. According to Clemmer, "leaders...are not isolated but exist only as the function of group life" (1940: 134). However, he also interpreted leadership among inmates as being vague, uncertain, indefinite, and not comparable with leadership in the free community (Clemmer, 1940: 145). Researchers since Clemmer's time have found the opposite to be true among inmates in correctional institutions (Cloward, 1960; McCleery, 1960; Grosser, 1960).

Cloward credits penal stability to the accommodative relationship that exists between the official system and the inmate system, represented by inmate leaders (1960). As he states, "stability depends on reciprocal adjustments between formal and inmate systems" (1960: 35). The official system unintentionally creates an illegitimate opportunity structure that aids the formation of inmate elites (Cloward, 1960; McCleery, 1960). The formation of inmate elites contributes to the production and maintenance of pluralistic ignorance-producing processes. It is impossible for the formal organization to meet all the needs of all the inmates, so an informal organization develops that fills this gap. For example, a place is created for the merchant role, an example of the pseudo-social role type mentioned earlier. The merchant seeks access to and control over the

distribution of goods and services; a kitchen worker or doctor's appointment-maker is able to influence the delivery of material goods or in the case of the latter, medical service. The politician, also an example of a pseudo-social inmate, participates in both the formal and informal organizations because of his manipulative role, is given access to information and custodial personnel which puts him in a position of power among other inmates. He is able to use this power to his advantage in the informal system. Finally, the right guy, in his loyalty to the inmate code and the honour and esteem he displays, gains the respect of inmates and officials alike. The officials may not agree with his views, but they may nonetheless respect him for the control he has over other inmates. Officials often use this influence to their own advantage, to maintain social control (Cloward, 1960: 33). The behaviour of right guys is predictable. Officers know how they will react in a given situation. This makes the right guy a good candidate for change. Unlike the asocial, unpredictable inmate, the right guy knows how to follow rules and standards for behaviour. His problem is he chooses to follow the anti-social code for behaviour.

In his research on inmate leaders and their followers, Clarence Schrag discovered that there is a significant tendency for inmates in all offense categories to select leaders committed for crimes of violence. The results indicate that leaders have served more years in prison, have longer sentences remaining to be served, more often have been incarcerated for crimes of violence, are repeat offenders, have a significantly greater number of serious rule infractions, and are more likely to be officially diagnosed as homosexual, psychoneurotic or psychopathic (Schrag, 1954: 40). In other words, the major proponents of the inmate subculture, its leaders, tend to be the least improvable inmates. It is probably safe to place such inmates on one end of the "right guy" continuum. As proponents of the subculture, these inmates will tend to encourage rebellion, non-conformity, and anti-social values. They keep other inmates 'in line' by making sure they follow the 'code'. This ensures that although they don't completely rebel and destroy the institutional balance, they do rebel 'enough' to keep the guard/inmate distinction clear and obvious. The implications of this tendency for pluralistic ignorance are significant. The worst (most violent, longest sentence) inmates are most influential and claim to be most representative of inmates in general. The inmate population appears to be blindly following these leader inmates.

The formal organization versus the informal organization. According to Grusky, all informal leaders derive influence from their ability to solve instrumental and expressive problems. Instrumental leaders acquire influence through their skill in accomplishing group goals. Expressive leaders possess skill in maintaining harmonious social relations (Grusky, 1959: 61). Moreover, he found that the orientation of an inmate leader varies with type of institution (custodial vs. treatment).

Grusky's study is based on an experimental prison camp. It was found that the camp goals of treatment and social control were related to the highly cooperative adaptation of the unofficial inmate leaders (1959: 60). By encouraging officials to be friendly and supportive rather than strictly custodial, it was hypothesized that social control would become dependent more on affection and less on strict physical discipline. This, in turn might promote and establish an accommodation between officials and inmate

leaders (1959: 60).

Indeed, with increased length of time in the camp, the proportion of inmate leaders with favourable attitudes increased. From the results of Grusky's study, it seems that certain segments of the prison population, namely the inmate leaders, may be informally coopted so as to further the acceptance of the treatment goal. In other words, "there may be important latent and unanticipated consequences and goals of quasi-milieu treatment for critical segments of the prison's organization" (Grusky, 1959: 67). In small prisons, where treatment is the dominant goal, it may be possible to establish cooperation between inmate leaders and staff, which will further the treatment goal (Grusky, 1959: 67; Berk, 1966). In establishing cooperation between inmates and staff, it may also be possible to reduce the amount and degree of pluralistic ignorance occurring between and among the two groups (inmates and staff).

Berk found that different inmate organizations form in response to either custodially oriented or treatment oriented formal organizations. These institutions may also be characterized by different levels of pluralistic ignorance. In custodial institutions, the formal and informal organizations are oriented toward the maintenance of internal order. Informal inmate leaders in such organizations rely on coercion and control toward this end (more pluralistic ignorance). In contrast, treatment-oriented institutions attempt to meet inmate needs. Leadership among inmates is based on consensus and cooperation and the number of inmates who occupy leadership positions is greater than in custodial institutions (Berk, 1966: 533). More leaders may mean more accurate representation of the beliefs and attitudes of the inmate population in general (less pluralistic ignorance). These findings have considerable implications for subcultural theory. But before we further analyze the inmate subculture, we must mention the correctional officer subculture and its place in the prison.

The correctional officer subculture. Zimbardo created an experimental prison with students playing the roles of inmates and correctional staff (1972). The study did not reach its intended duration - many participants became too emotionally and psychologically affected and were unable to complete the project. The study provides an interesting look at the prison organization itself and the effect such an organization can have on its members. Particularly interesting is the manner in which randomly chosen students, given the label of "guard" and placed with other students so labelled, spontaneously developed their own subculture, with unwritten rules and codes for behaviour. One-third of the "student guards" became tyrannical in their arbitrary use of power on fellow "student-inmates" (Zimbardo, 1972: 6). No "good guard" (the other two-thirds of the guard group) ever interfered with a command made by any of the bad guards. Essentially,

> the good guards perpetuated the prison more than the other guards because their own needs to be liked prevented them from disobeying or violating the implicit guards' code (Zimbardo, 1972: 6).

In a prison situation individual behaviour is largely under the control of social forces and environmental contingencies as opposed to personality traits, character, and will power (Zimbardo, 1972: 6). The organization of the prison, its social arrangements, and the nature of the role arrangement provides an environment conducive to the creation of a correctional officer subculture charged with the same hostility, frustration, and emotion as that of the inmates.

Some studies have described the correctional officer as the person "caught in the middle" (Duffee, 1974; Cheatwood, 1974). S/he is caught between the administrative subculture and the inmate subculture. A subculture develops when a situation becomes problematic for its members. According to Duffee, the problems for correctional officers began after the fundamental shift in the perceived humanity of inmates occurred. "The correctional officer subculture is born out of the frustrating belief that inmates deserve better treatment than officers are capable of giving under present circumstances" (Duffee, 1974: 156). As a result, many of the rewards and ideas of what makes a good guard are still based on the traditional system of paramilitary virtues of aloofness and distance, strict adherence to rules and unquestioned loyalty to the Warden.

Duffee looked at the effects of correctional policy, managerial behaviour, and social climate on the correctional officer group (1974: 157). He found that the policy most desired by the administration, one focussing on reintegration and rehabilitation of inmates, was not reaching the officer and inmate levels. Rather, officers have a completely different set of values which stresses change through compliance and restraint of inmates. As far as the social climate variable is concerned, it appears that positive dimensions of the social climate scale steadily decrease from the Warden down to the inmates and negative dimensions increase (Duffee, 1974: 161). As for managerial behaviour, the managers perceive the organization to be run very democratically, while officers see it as being autocratic. The data provide support for the existence of a correctional officer subculture, the values of which are antagonistic to the successful implementation of managerially desired correctional policy (Duffee, 1974: 168). The data also suggest that although officers <u>like</u> democratic superiors, they feel uncomfortable about behaving democratically when dealing with inmates.

Cheatwood conducted a study among correctional officers and similarly found that theirs is a subculture "caught" between two others (1974: 175). He specifically looked at attitudes and behaviours exhibited toward boys in a correctional facility, by three subcultures: the administrative subculture, the correctional officer subculture, and the inmate subculture (1974). Within the institution studied, the administration differentiated between "restricted boys", who are perceived to be dangerous, and all other boys. The boys themselves did not discriminate between the two labelled groups. Although the <u>correctional staff</u> saw no differences between the boys, they nonetheless indicated that they saw the labels as valid, thereby agreeing with the administration. The end result, according to Cheatwood, is the creation of a set of values and norms unique to the correctional staff. As he states,

> the staff create a set of values and
> criteria which is related both to the

> administration and the inmate culture
> but which cannot be evaluated or understood solely in terms of either one
> (Cheatwood, 1974: 149).

The creation of this set of beliefs derives from the social situation of lower correctional staff who interact with both the administration and with the inmate culture and therefore feel some sort of allegiance to both.

It seems obvious that a correctional officer subculture develops in correctional institutions. Every work day of their lives these men and women are faced with inmates convicted of crimes. It makes sense that they should feel a sense of union and a bond in the face of the potential danger they face. In prisons, where often violent inmates reside, the explosiveness of the situation necessitates that correctional officers may have to come to the aid of fellow officers in life or death situations. However, even the everyday routine experiences and duties within a correctional facility evoke the feelings of hostility, frustration, and emotions that seem to require the formation of a united front. It may be that the subculture of correctional officers provides them with the support (physical and emotional), sense of loyalty, and code for behaviour that helps them perform their duties adequately and cope with the stresses and frustrations that are a part of their job.

CHAPTER 3
PRISON SUBCULTURES: A CRITIQUE

In the futile moments of anxiety
there lies a force within me.
Dorment only because of its inability
to accept freedomlessness. Impulsive
by nature, but forced to contain its
whims beyond its natural capacity, to
bond into conformity, and to adhere
to the code.
-An inmate from Edmonton Institution

Prison subcultures, inmate roles and the inmate code may not be as strong or as anti-social as they seem. Research points to the existence of confusion among inmate and staff ranks, which has considerable implications for pluralistic ignorance, attempts to reduce it, and the conflict and violence that result from it. This chapter presents evidence that inmate and staff subcultures are conceptualized incorrectly, and that as a result, so are the stereotypes and conflicts based on such subcultures.

Prison subcultures may not be exactly as they seem

Several researchers have raised doubts about the validity of the 'prison subculture' as an entity (Berk, 1966; Grusky, 1959; Garabedian, 1964; Moos, 1968; Toch and Klofas, 1982; Akers et al, 1976; Whitehead and Lindquist, 1989; Chang and Zastrow, 1976; Philliber, 1987; Lombardo, 1985; Brown et al., 1971). For example, Grusky discovered that when officials are encouraged to be friendly and supportive toward inmates, social control becomes dependent more on affect and less on physical discipline. It was found that this type of relationship promotes an accommodation between officials and inmate leaders. Berk similarly found that the type of formal organization of an institution will directly affect the informal (inmate) organization within the institution. The types and techniques of inmate leadership, and the goals of the inmate organization form in response to the specific deprivations experienced by the inmates, the gaps in services provided by the formal organization, and the policies informing the formal organization. Furthermore, differences in institutional goals influence staff perceptions about inmates, staff-inmate authority relations, and the patterns of social relations and leadership that emerge among inmates (Street et al., 1965). All of these factors have important implications for the production of pluralistic ignorance and for its reduction.

The assessment of the social climate of correctional institutions may prove more beneficial than continuing to focus on individuals within institutions (Moos, 1968). Social climate includes not only the officer and inmate subcultures but also the state of relations between these groups and the administration. It is affected by recent incidents, new rules, different movement orders and anything else that affects the level of tension within the institution. Moos used a social climate index to assess correctional institutions on this

dimension. He discovered that "certain types of social climates may be more likely than others to produce behaviourial effects in the majority of individuals exposed to them " (1968: 187). So, certain climates may be more likely to facilitate pluralistic ignorance produced misperceptions. This, combined with the results of Grusky's and Berk's studies, indicates that the inmate "subculture" may not be as static or as well-defined an entity as many people have assumed. These findings imply that the importation model discussed earlier does not take into account the significant effect the institutional organization has on the inmate group. Particularly interesting in this respect is Moos' finding that social climate differences between units in the **same** institution may be as great or greater than differences between units at different institutions. This finding implies that groups of inmates and staff members may behave differently toward each other, thus creating different social climates within the same institution. If this is in fact the case, the idea of an inmate population unified in beliefs and actions becomes less realistic. Furthermore, this also implies that different units in the same institution may also have differing levels and degrees of pluralistic ignorance. Following this line of thought, it also seems likely then that different units, with different levels of pluralistic ignorance also have different levels of conflict and violence.

Garabedian's (1964) study on an inmate-sponsored therapy group similarly shows that the "inmate subculture" may not be as alienated and isolated from law-abiding society and pro-social behaviour as is often thought. Garabedian points to external pressures toward conformity as the reason why the inmates he studied adopted legitimate means in an effort to achieve staff-sponsored goals. The inmates in his study started their own therapy group. It was their way of conforming to staff goals while still maintaining a sense of autonomy as inmates. This supports the proposition that individual members of the inmate "subculture" may not be as hostile to pro-social values as they are assumed to be. Similarly, Sykes and Matza propose that rather than forming a culture in marked conflict with society, juvenile delinquency represents "not a radical opposition to law-abiding society, but an apologetic failure" (1957: 667). Based on Garabedian's research, the inmates who sponsored the therapy group acknowledge the existence of legitimate goals and procedures, while maintaining their status as inmates. It may be that some inmates, like delinquents, are not rejecting societal standards; they respect and abide by the majority of society's rules and accepted standards for behaviour.

Sykes found that inmates tended to not identify themselves with other inmates in some sort of alliance with a criminal world or subculture (Sykes, 1957). Rather, inmates formed an alienated, insecure, involuntary union of men who could not feel safe with each other or with officials (Roebuck, 1963; Sykes, 1957). This finding fails to support the importational hypothesis that inmates share a latent criminal subculture in the free world and bring it with them to prison. It also discredits any notion of inmates being united in the face of common deprivations and frustrations (functional model). Rather, inmate relations are characterized by exploitation, fraud, and force. There was "little cohesiveness of prisoners and no inmate priesthood which functioned as the custodian of a 'criminal-subculture' value system" (Roebuck, 1963: 197; Sykes, 1957). Although many inmates may adhere verbally to the inmate code, they may surreptitiously avoid acting according to its dictates. This is essentially what is meant by pluralistic ignorance. Only

a few of the inmate elite actually believe in the code's tenets, yet many more inmates pay public allegiance to it. Essentially, "there was certainly no evidence of a nurtured 'criminal subculture'" (Roebuck, 1963: 197; Sykes, 1957).

Clemmer characterized the inmate world as an atomized one, lacking a uniform value system, where exploitation and dishonesty are more important than cooperation.

> The prison code was frequently broken. Inmates stole from each other and informed officials about one another. The tenure of inmate leaders was brief and tenuous. Their functions were minor....(1940: 107).

The significance of inmate role types for the inmate subculture. Clarence Schrag's typology of inmate roles has been the basis of several studies on the inmate subculture (Garabedian, 1963; Akers et al., 1976; Garabedian, 1962; Schrag, 1954; Wheeler, 1961). The idea of differing role types with different levels of commitment to the inmate code raises doubt regarding the idea of a united, solidary inmate subculture. The right guys (anti-social) are the most committed to the convict code. They represent the "role model" inmate type. Yet it seems that there exists little cohesiveness of prisoners, and no one group exhibits strong leadership and commitment to the subcultural value system (Clemmer, 1940; Roebuck, 1963: 197; Sykes, 1958). Sykes and Messinger found that inmates give strong verbal support to a system of values that has group cohesion or inmate solidarity as its theme, but actual behaviours range from full adherence to deviance from such a "code" (1960: 11).

Added to this is the finding of Akers, Gruninger, and Hayner in their research on prisons in five countries. The vast majority of prisoners identified themselves as either square johns (pro-social: 42.8%) or right guys (43.1%). The authors conclude that the square john and the right guy role may be equally functional adaptations to prison (1976: 378). The right guy because he rejects his rejectors, thus protecting himself; the square john because he accepts his punishment as part of being a member of society and vows to never re-offend. Garabedian, in his research on the inmate-sponsored therapy group mentioned above, attributes much of the success of the group to the fact that it was endorsed by not only the right guys, who initiated the idea, but also by the square johns. Stability was afforded the innovation because right guy membership appealed to the inmates while square john membership legitimized the group in the eyes of the administration (Garabedian, 1962: 181). This is just one example of the ability of both inmate types to prove functional to inmate survival. If both types are equally functional to functioning well in prison, the idea of the right guy role being necessary to survival loses strength.

How unified and anti-social can the inmate culture truly be when half of its members describe themselves as pro-social (square johns)? This finding raises some doubt regarding the consensus among inmates and the extent of their anti-conformity stance toward staff and society. It provides support, however, to the existence of pluralistic ignorance and the idea that more inmates are pro-social than the inmate 'group' and its

leaders would like to have us believe. This is further complicated by the existence of con politicians and outlaws in the ranks of the inmate group. The con politician is committed to both the staff group and the inmate group; outlaws are 'asocial', committed to neither inmates nor staff. What does this mean for the solidarity of the inmate group? How can the con politician effectively contribute to the strength of the inmate culture when half the time his 'loyalties' lie with staff? How advantageous to the inmate cause are outlaws when their asocial, unpredictable behaviour often makes them the enemy of staff and inmates alike?

It may be that not all inmates become highly prisonized. This means that the adoption of the inmate culture is also not uniform. As a result, "we come to picture the inmate society as being not cohesive, but primarily organized around roles, which are in many respects conflicting" (Wellford, 1967: 202). This leaves room for a lot of role-switching when it is convenient for the inmate, a lot of hypocracy and backstabbing, and a lot of unpredictable and inconsistent behaviour among inmates. This is not the type of impression the inmate leaders attempt to portray to staff and outsiders. Rather they prefer to portray the 'inmate subculture' as a strong group of inmates unanimous in their support of anti-social, anti-staff beliefs and behaviour.

Length of time and prisonization. Some researchers have looked at the relationship between length of time in prison and degree of commitment to the inmate code (Wheeler, 1961; Garabedian, 1963). Wheeler looked specifically at the phase of an inmate's institutional career and the extent of prisonization. The findings indicate a U-shaped pattern of adaptation. In the early and late phases of an inmate's institutionalization, there is a greater chance of conformity to staff opinion, while in the middle phase there is evidence of adherence to the inmate culture. In other words, the prison culture has its greatest impact on inmates in the middle phase of their sentence, at the point where the inmate is furthest removed from the free community. Yet, the data show that while the middle phase is characterized by higher consensus among inmates in the direction of non-conformity *all inmates **do not** become right guys* (Garabedian, 1963: 147). The consensus-producing processes experienced in the middle phase are not strong enough to modify the role types significantly. Rather, right guys remain right guys, square johns remain square johns and so on. The role type they fill when they enter the institution does not change throughout their sentence. These shifts in attitude occur without the inmates relinquishing their respective roles (Garabedian, 1963: 147).

Several other researchers have found evidence that does not support Wheeler's findings (Barak-Glantz, 1983; Faine, 1973; Hepburn and Stratton, 1977; Thomas, 1977; Thomas and Zingraff, 1976). For example, Faine found that prisonization is determined by the self-concepts which inmates bring to prison (1973). Contrary to Wheeler's argument, Faine's data indicate that inmates with 'deviant' self-concepts experienced the greatest prisonization. Furthermore, their prisonization increased in a linear direction during successive career phases (Faine, 1973: 576). Inmates on the other end of the continuum, those who felt part of legitimate society, experienced no change in prisonization. Inmates who were tied neither to a deviant nor a legitimate self-image (ie. those who fluctuated between the two ends of the continuum) showed an incease in

prisonization during the middle phase and a decrease during the late phase of their sentences (Faine, 1973: 576). Faine's findings essentially found that Wheeler's U-shaped curve for prisonization does not apply to all inmates and is significantly affected by inmate self-concepts (1973). Thomas similarly found that patterns of inmate adaptation to prison are partly a function of pre-prison and extra-prison factors (1977; Thomas and Zingraff, 1976). It seems that who the inmate was before he entered prison, and the contacts he maintains with people and groups outside of the prison setting have an important influence on the appeal of the inmate subculture and the extent of his prisonization.

Hepburn and Stratton found no support for the prisonization model: they found no relationship between commitment to the inmate social system and self-esteem, even during the middle phase of institutional career, the point in their sentence when inmates should be most committed to the inmate culture according to Wheeler's theory (Hepburn and Stratton, 1977: 237). Barak-Glantz (1983) divided inmates into four groups according to their patterns of misconduct within prison. The different patterns of misconduct represent adaptations to prison. The implication from this study is that in today's correctional institutions, there is no unified inmate body. Rather, because of increased support from individuals and groups outside prison, increased inmate rights and new sources of income and prestige for inmates (ie. drugs), the inmate social system and inmate code no longer are necessary to inmate survival. The breakdown of the traditional inmate social system also implies that prisonization or assimilation to the subculture does not occur in the same way nor to the extent that has traditionally been thought (Barak-Glantz, 1983: 129). The findings from these studies imply that (1) inmates do not necessarily become more prisonized during the middle phase of their institutional career (2) inmates may not find that they need to turn to the inmate social system for survival in prison. In other words, the evidence supports the idea that inmates do retain pro-social beliefs and attitudes, and not all inmates support, whether publicly or privately, the inmate subculture. Implications for the reduction of pluralistic ignorance among inmates are significant.

All of these factors provide substance to Garabedian's conclusion that there is in fact, limited formation of a subculture within the institution (1963: 151). Rather, there may be a few core members of the inmate population who are loud enough to make it appear that an inmate subculture really exists. The point of this dicussion is that there are variations in commitment to the 'inmate subculture'. Lack of consistency in opinion, combined with pluralistic ignorance, points to the existence of an inmate subculture less solidary than is thought.

Pluralistic ignorance and the 'inmate subculture'

Several studies have documented pluralistic ignorance among inmates (Clemmer, 1940; Akers et al., 1977; Thomas, 1973; Tittle and Tittle, 1964; Schwartz, 1971; McCleery, 1960; Wheeler, 1961). Regarding the inmate code, "'consensus-fostered rigidity of adherence' does not find empirical support when actual behaviours of inmates are observed" (Thomas, 1973: 257). Rigid adherence to the inmate code is improbable. Tittle and Tittle claim that although the expressed values of the inmate social organization tend

to be anti-rehabilitation, they are not necessarily so. In other words, individual members may actually support rehabilitation efforts and programs, even though the "official" inmate organization rejects rehabilitation. This brings the idea of representative "inmate social organization values" into question. This finding leads Tittle and Tittle to speculate that perhaps subscription to the prison code might be a manoeuvre by some inmates to avoid unnecessary conflict with fellow inmates (1964: 221). As Clemmer found among the prison population he studied, the majority of inmates themselves do not share the common impression that consensus within the group is strong behind the prison walls (1940: 123). Essentially, although most inmates recognize the pervasive influence of the inmate culture, *this does not mean they all hold private allegiance to it* (Akers et al., 1977).

> In each prison the proportion of inmates reporting themselves in non-conformity with staff norms is much less than the proportion reporting that other inmates hold similar anti-staff attitudes (Akers et al., 1977: 536).

It seems that most inmates overestimate the extent to which others deviate from conventional norms. Pluralistic ignorance occurs all in one direction; few inmates see others as less prisonized than themselves. Inmates in general overestimate the degree to which other inmates adhere to the inmate culture (Akers et al., 1977: 547).

Wheeler (1961), in his study on prison inmates, found that they overperceive conflict in the role expectations of staff and inmates. The inmate feels he is under pressure to conform to the expectations he perceives other inmates to hold. By measuring personal attitudes of inmates and corrections officers, and comparing these attitudes with the perceived attitudes the groups have of each other, Wheeler found that the average corrections officer holds opinions that are closer to those of inmates than these opinions are perceived to be. The largest difference he found is between real and estimated support for rehabilitation between the two groups. Contrary to popular perceptions held by the groups, both inmates and officers privately support rehabilitation, despite the perception that the inmate subculture rejects rehabilitation attempts (Wheeler, 1961; Toch, 1984). These misinformed perceptions may be the result of both the prison environment and group processes.

Pluralistic ignorance and the 'guard subculture'

One of the main problems in prison is that inmates and correctional staff conceive of each other in terms of narrow, hostile stereotypes. As Clemmer says, in reference to the pro-custodial, anti-inmate correctional officer subculture:

> While such attitudes seem horrible..., we must realize that they are reflections of the attitudes of society which have become somewhat exaggerated as prison

> officials observe the conduct of inmates
> year after year (1940: 185).

It may be pluralistic ignorance-producing processes that contribute to this exaggeration of perception and resulting misperceptions. Guards and prisoners are drawn from the same culture and they hold many of the same values and beliefs (Sykes, 1958: 33). It is their roles as "guards" and "inmates", and the processes that influence their perceptions and expectations within these roles that contribute to their often antagonistic relationship within the walls of the prison.

The correctional officer subculture has been briefly described in the previous chapter. Research has found that pluralistic ignorance operates among correctional staff as well as inmates (Duffee, 1974; Kauffman, 1981; Klofas, 1982; Wheeler, 1961). Using a pluralistic ignorance index, Toch and Klofas confirmed that the most cynical staff respondents are the most likely to believe that their views are supported, yet are the most inaccurate. They believe strongly in an anti-inmate subculture that does not exist. In the survey that Klofas and Toch distributed to correctional staff members in four New York maximum security prisons, officers consistently overestimated their peers' alienation and underestimated their professional orientation (Klofas and Toch, 1982: 242). The authors fit the sample into officer "types" and found that the smallest group of typed officers are the "Subculture Custodians", "the bell ringers of the mythological subculture" (17% of the total sample). The group next in membership size is the "Lonely Brave" group (26.2% of the total sample) whose members mistakenly feel surrounded by hostile conservatives. However, the largest group of officers do not subscribe to the anti-inmate subculture myths. This "Supported Majority" (44.5% of the total sample) is professionally oriented and accurately estimates the professional orientation of peers (Klofas and Toch, 1982: 247).

These results indicate that the so-called correctional officer subculture, driven by pro-custodial anti-inmate norms, is an exaggeration. As Klofas and Toch say,

> The strongest purveyors of "hard-nosed"
> pro-custodial imagery are those who
> hold the view most strongly themselves,
> project it onto their peers, and are
> immune to the influence of others - the
> Subculture Custodians...(they) play a dis-
> proportionate role in trying to influence
> others through their unrepresentative,
> self-appointed role as spokesmen (1982: 251).

The result is that brave and dedicated officers feel lonely: pluralistic ignorance exists. These findings imply that in order to reduce pluralistic ignorance lonely braves must be shown that their views are in keeping with the majority. The subculture custodians must be shown the error of their ways. It is likely that the subculture custodians are the least likely to change: they may be set in their ways. Therefore, the lonely braves should be

the focal point for any efforts at reducing pluralistic ignorance. They, after all, already possess professional attitudes, they just need to be convinced that the majority of their colleagues in fact hold the same attitudes and opinions as they do.

Kauffman's findings also provide support for the existence of pluralistic ignorance among prison officers. Kauffman used a questionnaire comprised of eight hypothetical dilemma situations, followed by questions designed to measure personal attitudes and perceptions of others' attitudes. Officers' private attitudes indicate supportive attitudes toward inmates and treatment. Perceptions of the attitudes of fellow correctional officers indicate an underestimation of the proportion of fellow officers who hold attitudes sympathetic toward inmates and treatment (Kauffman, 1981: 285). In effect, staff members see other staff as being more anti-inmate and anti-treatment than the reality of individual officers' attitudes warrant (Kauffman, 1981; Toch, 1984). Furthermore, as with the officers studied by Klofas and Toch, officers who gave these types of responses (anti-inmate, anti-treatment) were more likely to perceive that they held the dominant view. Those officers giving inmate sympathetic views felt they were an isolated minority and were very different from their colleagues. Perceived attitudes among staff exaggerate staff opposition to inmates and treatment. Kauffman points out that pluralistic ignorance may be most characteristic of groups where members feel solidarity is essential to survival (1981: 291). This may be particularly true of the two groups of people making up the prison community. Whatever the reason, it is clear from the studies mentioned that the two opposing prison subcultures are perceived by the members of each to be at greater odds than the privately held attitudes of their members indicate. Essentially, it appears that staff and inmates are more similar in opinions and beliefs than the "inmate subculture versus guard subculture conflict" would have us believe.

The present study aims to show that guards and inmates are more similar in beliefs and attitudes than the officer/inmate opposition leads us to believe. While public attitudes and perceptions of those attitudes indicate that differences in attitudes are great, it may be that private inmate and officer attitudes are actually more similar than they appear. Or, at least, they may not be as different and as opposed to each other as the subcultural perspective would like us to believe. One hypothesis is that staff and inmates within a correctional institution are more similar in their private attitudes than either group is aware of. In other words, pluralistic ignorance exists and exaggerates the differences between the two groups. The inmate subculture-correctional officer subculture opposition is less than assumed.

A second objective is to attempt to measure the perceptions of the private attitudes for inmates and correctional officers and compare them to see if any trends in misperceptions are actually occurring. It is hypothesized that if the gaps in perceptions between the two groups exaggerate the differences in private attitudes between them, it would seem that pluralistic ignorance does in fact exist.

The third hypothesis is that inmate and staff prescriptions and expectations for behaviour should show trends similar to those for personal approval and perception of approval (prescriptions are similar to approval; expectations to perceptions of approval). The following chapter describes in detail the methodology used in attempting to measure pluralistic ignorance among and between inmates and officers in the present study.

CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY

The intent of this thesis project is to measure the degree and extent of bias in group perceptions among inmates and correctional staff in a maximum security correctional institution. The goals of the study are threefold:

(1) to develop a questionnaire aimed at measuring private attitudes and group perceptions of certain inmate and staff behaviour.
(2) to administer the questionnaires to all staff and inmates at Edmonton Institution, a federal maximum security institution in Alberta.
(3) to analyze and present the results from the questionnaires to the participants and to effect some change in attitudes by demonstrating the contributing effect of pluralistic ignorance on prison violence and conflict among members of a prison community.

Measuring the Concepts

Pluralistic ignorance is operationalized in terms of the degree of consensus and/or conflict in the attitudes of each group toward inmates and staff. Specifically, several aspects of an individual's attitude are measured. First, a scenario (see Appendix E for complete questionnaire) is presented involving behaviour which resembles a conflict situation that may hypothetically occur between inmates or between inmates and staff. The respondent states his approval or disapproval of the action taken in the scenario on a Likert-type response choice. Nine scenarios are presented, involving hypothetical inmate or staff members. The following is a modified example of one of the scenarios from Wheeler's study (1961), after which this study is modelled:

> An inmate, without thinking, commits a minor rule infraction. He is given a "write-up" by a correctional officer who saw the violation. Later three other inmates are talking to each other about it. Two of them criticize the officer. The third, Sykes disagrees with the other two inmates and supports the officer.

As an example, personal attitudes and perceptions are compared using Wheeler's results for this 'rule infraction' scenario.

Personal attitudes were measured by asking the respondent how he personally feels about the inmate's action. For example, the following question follows this 'rule infraction' scenario:

How do you personally feel about inmate Sykes defending the officer?

_Strongly approve
_Approve
_Disapprove
_Strongly Disapprove

This item attempts to assess **personal attitudes.** For the 'rule infraction' situation, the percentage for each group's private personal attitudes are as follows: 47% of inmates approve of the inmate's action to defend the officer, and 85% of custody staff approve. In other words, 47% of inmates marked off the "strongly approve" or the "approve" choices on the questionnaire. The percentage difference between the private attitudes of the inmate group and the staff group is 38% (85%-47%). Staff and inmates do disagree in their attitudes regarding proper inmate behaviour, as is expected. Wheeler points out that, depending on the popularity of the officer in question, private attitudes may vary. Regardless of the specific details of the incident, however, there is an obvious rift in opinions between the two opposing groups.

Perception of attitudes of both inmates and staff is measured using the following question and answer format:

How many inmates [or staff] do you think would approve of inmate Sykes' action to defend the officer?

_Almost all would approve
_About three-fourths would approve
_About half would approve
_About one fourth would approve
_Almost none would approve

This item attempts to assess the perceptions respondents have about their own subculture and the opposing subculture. This percentage was calculated by averaging the responses of the inmates; it is the mean perception of approval among inmates. In Wheeler's study (1961), **perceptions** of inmate approval for Sykes' action among staff and inmates indicate even greater differences in attitudes. Inmate perception of *inmate approval* is 15%: fifteen percent of inmates believe that their fellow inmates will approve of the inmate's action. The difference between their own 47% approval rate of the act and perception of a 15% approval rate by other inmates represents a 32% difference between personal views and the perceived view of the inmate subculture. Thus, they perceive other inmates as more extreme, more anti-social than themselves.

Among custody staff, 22% believe inmates would approve of the inmate's action in the scenario. Compared with the inmate approval rate of 47%, the perception staff have of inmate approval is also inaccurate. There is a 25% difference (47%-22%) between the

personal views of inmates and the perceived view staff have of the inmate subculture.

The results for this particular scenario are representative of Wheeler's findings in general. As with the results for the other scenarios used in Wheeler's study, inmate attitudes are perceived by both staff and inmates to be more opposed to staff norms than is indicated by the private responses of inmates (Wheeler, 1961: 240). Moreover, *the inmates consistently exaggerate the misperceptions more so than the staff.* The *inmates perceive themselves to be even more anti-social* than staff perceive them to be. In addition to this, the groups are perceiving more conflict in attitudes than actually exists. "Though the differences in *actual* expectations between inmates and staff are quite large, they are uniformly less than they are *perceived* to be by inmates and staff alike" (Wheeler, 1961: 240; italics and underlining added).

Kauffman conducted a study similar to Wheeler's on prison officers only (1981). She too found that prison officers perceive their colleagues as being less sympathetic to inmates and treatment than they report themselves to be. Her data, based on officer responses to eight scenarios presenting dilemmas to the officers, strongly support the existence of pluralistic ignorance among officers (Kauffman, 1981: 287).

Essentially, inmate and staff attitudes may not be as different as they are perceived to be. These results indicate that misperceptions are occurring. By looking at perceptions alone, the conclusion that can be drawn is that there are large differences between the attitudes of inmates and staff; an inmate society appears to exist guided by norms contradictory to staff. Yet, when actual, private attitudes are revealed, this difference is reduced in magnitude, lending only partial support to the conflicting subculture image of prison communities. Although differences do exist between the groups, these differences seem to be exaggerated; staff and inmates **perceive** that more inmates disapprove of the pro-social action than actual private attitudes indicate (Wheeler, 1961). And, inmates exaggerate the misperception more so than staff. The present study expects to find supporting evidence for exaggerated differences in private attitudes and perceptions of attitudes among correctional staff and inmates. In addition to the personal views and perceptions which Wheeler studied (1961), the present study also attempts to measure prescriptions and expectations of staff and inmates.

Prescriptions, measured by the second response format for measuring private attitudes, is a forced choice response:

What should inmate Sykes do?

1. He should not say anything.
2. He should defend the officer.

This item would attempt to assess the prescriptions or true norms informing the respondent's answer. It is hypothesized that the majority of inmates and staff will choose the more pro-social action (ie. He should defend the officer). In other words, most people will acknowledge the fact that pro-social action is more desirable; it is what we, as members of a society, 'should' do when faced with a dilemma.

Expectations will be measured by the following forced choice response item:

What would most inmates do?

1. Most inmates would stay quiet and not say anything.
2. Most inmates would speak up and defend the officer in front of the other two inmates.

This item is intended to assess the expectations respondents have for what most people would actually do if faced with a similar situation as the subject in the scenario. It is predicted that, for the inmates, the majority of expectations will tend to be more anti-social, reflecting the tendency of one to see oneself in a more positive, prosocial light than others. It is predicted that staff expectations of inmate behaviour will also be anti-social: staff expect inmates to be 'anti-custody officer'. However, it is hypothesized that inmates' expectations of inmate behaviour will be more extreme and more anti-social than the expectations staff members have of inmate behaviour.

Sampling

The nature of the study necessitated a purposive sample, specifically, the inmate and staff populations at the Edmonton Institution. Edmonton Institution was chosen because it is the only federal maximum security correctional facility within reasonable travelling distance for the researcher. As well, the Institution has recently experienced several incidents of violence between inmates, including a murder. Within the institution, all inmates (approximately 280) and all correctional staff (approximately 175) were asked to participate. Out of this, 125 inmates participated (45% response rate) and 98 correctional officers responded (56% response rate). Correctional officers appear to be overwhelmed by the number of questionnaires they are asked to complete, thus their less than enthusiastic response rate. Convincing the inmates of the anonymity of the questionnaire and the importance of the study (as well as its relevance to them personally) is the primary reason for the low inmate response rate. It also became evident that in light of more pressing concerns facing the inmate population, this study did not seem important to them. For example, when the researcher approached the segregation unit to participate, all fifty questionnaires were thrown (literally) back into her face. Additional problems encountered with inmates and staff will be discussed in further detail below. Suffice it to say that the results of the study may be based on questionnaires returned by inmates who are more trusting and staff who are more patient and understanding.

An attempt was made to collect personal information on the respondents (age, number of years spent in jail or corrections, length of sentence, time spent in the institution, ethnicity). The majority of respondents either wrote facetious comments, left this section blank, or commented that the small population of inmates and staff made it possible to identify a person on the basis of this information. Again, this was a result of the trust issue mentioned earlier; inmates were afraid that the Administration would have

access to the questionnaires and would use the information against them in their files. Thus, identification became an issue for them. It was an issue for correctional staff for the same reasons.

Data Collection

The method of data collection took the form of a self-administered questionnaire. As was mentioned previously, the questionnaire consisted of scenarios, followed by Likert-type choices, forced choices, and choices involving estimations. Central characters within the scenarios were inmates for some questions, staff for others. The inmates filled out the questionnaires individually, in their cells. All possible attempts were made to ensure anonymity for the respondents while filling out the questionnaire. It is difficult to know how many illiterate inmates were unable to complete the questionnaire because of the procedure used for distribution. The researcher was able to help one such inmate complete his questionnaire, and knows of one other who was excluded from the study for this reason (she was unable to help him because of institutional constraints). Staff were given the questionnaires with their paycheques and were asked to return them to a box at the Main Gate, the place they all have to walk through to get into and out of the institution.

Procedure

At several stages throughout the research project, problems were encountered, many of which could have easily been avoided. These problems led to countless delays and frustrations on the part of the researchers and the participants involved in the project. For these reasons the project did not proceed as well as it could have.

Initial meetings. Initial contacts were made with the inmate "Unit reps" for each of the eight units at Edmonton Institution. Although this step had been slated for late September or early October of 1993, it did not actually occur until late December. Unfortunately this was only the first of many more delays, complications, and cancellations by the prison administration. The researcher was accompanied to each unit and introduced to these individuals, as well as to the staff members on duty. She was able to introduce herself and briefly describe the study. The reason for this step was to "advertise" the study, hopefully gain some support for it among inmates and staff, spread the word about it, and enlist volunteers for the interviewing and questionnaire stages of the project.

The Poster. In an effort to heighten interest and increase the response rate of the volunteer participants, a poster was created. The poster introduced the researcher, explained the purpose of the research, and outlined the format of the study. Unfortunately, what started out to be a one-page cordiality turned into a formal document requiring approval, revisions, more approvals, and more revisions. Initially slated for posting in early October, the poster did not achieve final approval until early January! (Rumour has it the poster never did see institutional walls as none of the inmates spoken to claimed to have seen it.)(see Appendix A)

As well, a short article was placed in the staff "Routine Orders", a newsletter put

out by the institution, with the same purpose in mind. This step did not cause any significant problems for the administration and therefore did not experience any delays. (see Appendix B)

The Interviews. Face-to-face interviews with inmates and correctional staff members were required in order to create realistic scenarios for the questionnaire. These interviews also served as a means of pre-test for the developing questionnaire. Initially scheduled for November, these interviews did not occur until late February as a result of administrative miscommunication, and the promotion of the researcher's primary contact at the institution to a new position that precluded any further involvement in the study. To the researcher's dismay, the new contact was not as appreciative of prison research as the former contact, and did not see the importance of further interviews. As a result, only ten interviews were conducted instead of the original twenty that were desired.

Five inmates and five correctional staff members, who had volunteered to participate, were interviewed individually. They were asked questions about life in prison, conflicts in prison, and communication between and among inmates and staff. They were also asked to review a sample questionnaire and to comment on the scenarios and questions. This served as a pre-test and from the comments, changes were made to the questionnaire. (see Appendix C)

Administration of the Questionnaire. Inmates. Administration of the questionnaire to inmates did not proceed as planned. Two days before the actual administration was to occur, the researcher sent a letter to each inmate (distributed by the contact person at the institution) advising him of the project, the questionnaire that he would be receiving in two days, and procedure that would take place for completing the questionnaire (See Appendix D). Administration of the questionnaires involved passing the questionnaire under each inmate's cell door. Any questions or concerns of the inmates regarding the study were answered at this time. Needless to say the inmates did not appreciate this invasion of privacy nor the obvious rudeness of the whole ordeal. The original plan was to collect the questionnaire at the end of the lock-up during which they were handed out. However, it became obvious that many of the respondents didn't have enough time to complete the questionnaire. Any completed questionnaires were collected, but it was decided that the remainder would be picked up at a later date. Two days later the researcher returned to collect the questionnaires, only to find the institution "locked down". Two days later the researcher returned to collect the questionnaires, by knocking on each cell door, asking for the questionnaire. For obvious reasons, the response rate was not very high. Part of the problem was that the researcher was permitted to go from cell to cell only during the inmates' lock-up before lunch. Approximately ninety percent of the inmates were asleep during this time and no amount of knocking on their cell doors would wake them up.

Administration of the Questionnaire. Correctional Staff. Correctional staff members received their questionnaire with their March paycheque. Also enclosed with the questionnaire was a letter from the Warden, endorsing the study and encouraging staff members to participate. In an effort to increase the response rate for staff respondents, a $1 coin (a loonie) was enclosed with each questionnaire. The strategy is designed to create cognitive dissonance which can only be resolved by completing the questionnaire.

This technique has worked particularly well in increasing survey returns to over 90% (Hackler and Bourgette, 1973). Staff were asked to return their completed questionnaires by dropping them into a box at the Main Gate, the place they sign in at when entering the institution. The response rate for the officers was 56% (See Appendix F for covering letter to questionnaire for staff and inmates). Although a similar tactic was attempted for inmates - the Administration was approached about allowing the researcher to deposit one dollar into each inmate's financial account - the request was denied.

Re-administration of the questionnaire. In an effort to increase the inmate response rate, Dr. Hackler arranged for the two of us to meet with the Warden of the Institution, the Deputy Warden, and the Assistant Warden, Management Services. The outcome of the meeting was very positive and encouraging. These members of the Administration became convinced of the importance of the research project, and were helpful in suggesting ways to improve the inmate response rate. As a result of this meeting, a meeting was arranged between the researcher and the Inmate Unit Representatives. The goal of a meeting with the inmate representatives was to convince these influential inmates of the importance of the study and to encourage them to speak to other inmates about it.

The meeting was arranged for May 4, 1994. Upon arriving at Edmonton Institution, the researcher was turned away because the institution was locked down. The meeting was rescheduled for May 12. Immediately prior to the meeting the Assistant Warden informed the researcher that the inmates did not want to meet with her and did not want to have anything to do with the project. However, he told them that they should at least inform her in person about how they felt and why they felt this way. The researcher managed to convince the inmate representatives that the study was worthwhile, and they agreed to do their best to help her in her efforts to increase the inmate response rate. They suggested several avenues to reach this end. After the meeting it was agreed that one of the inmate representatives would accompany the researcher from unit to unit, helping to re-administer the questionnaire.

Re-administration of the questionnaire eventually took place. Unfortunately, the Inmate Representative who was to accompany the researcher did not materialize. (Although I had informed the administration which inmate had volunteered to help me, and had set a date for this to occur, when the date came, no one knew anything about the arrangements.) Rather, the researcher was sent on her merry way into the institution, alone, with no idea of where to go to find any inmates (up until this day I had always been accompanied by someone from the Administration building whenever I entered the institution). The researcher managed to find the school classroom. The teachers here and the inmates were very cooperative and filled out the questionnaire with little problem (one inmate required my help because he could not read well). There were approximately twenty inmates here.

Next, the researcher wandered into the industrial shops area, where the response to the questionnaire was less than welcoming. One inmate out of six completed the questionnaire. Next came the kitchen area. Here the researcher experienced the most difficulty in convincing the inmates to fill out the questionnaire. Because of a few vocal inmates in the group, word eventually spread among the kitchen workers that the questionnaire was part of a study set up by the administration to get information for

inmate files and to spy on the inmates. Although several inmates accepted the questionnaires to fill out, within seconds they returned them uncompleted.

At this point it was decided by the administration that the researcher might be more successful in the reception units. These are the units where inmates are sent to after leaving the Remand Centre and before being placed in another institution. Essentially, it is where they go through their initial evaluations and their 'training' on how to be an inmate. These two units are **not** part of the general population and do not mix with general population inmates at all. These inmates were more than cooperative in filling out the questionnaire. Uncontaminated by the rumour regarding the study that had spread within the general population, and familiar with all sorts of tests and evaluations, these inmates were almost eager to fill out the questionnaire (they were also probably happy to leave their cells which they are confined to for twenty-three hours a day, even if it was only for twenty minutes). About thirty questionnaires were completed by these reception inmates. However, because of the assurance of anonymity as a condition for filling out the questionnaires, no record was made of which questionnaires were completed by reception inmates and which were filled out by inmates in the general population. As it now stands, the inmate response rate is approximately 45%.

Climate of the Institution. The atmosphere of the institution at this time is not well suited to the type of research being conducted. Relationships between staff and inmates have been poor. The fact that a guard was stabbed recently highlights the tensions at the institution. Shortly before the research project began, the Inmate Committee was eliminated. Double bunking was being implemented as the questionnaires were being distributed. The inmates and staff clearly have concerns that are more pressing than those of the research project. The hope that this research could lead to an easing of tensions, and potentially a reduction of violence, was not recognized by the inmates. Trust was lacking among the inmates, and many did not believe the questionnaires would be anonymous and confidential (ie. the administration and correctional officers would not have access to them). Therefore, many did not fill them out. The following are examples of the types of comments inmates wrote on their questionnaires before returning them. It is likely that the following comments reflect the general feeling among the inmates who did not return their questionnaires.

> If you would like to get some real feedback,
> I feel that one on one talk would be better!!
> I've got over 18 years in, and I know alot of
> guys in here would not give feedback on this
> questionnaire! But that's just what I think!!
>
> Your study is biassed by portraying inmates in
> negative manner. I disagree with your questions
> and your perceptions of inmates as a whole.
>
> Questions like these get us in trouble so don't
> bother us with this bullshit. (written beside each

scenario)...cannot answer questions like this...
not able to answer a question like this...not able
to answer questions due to the seriousness of them.

Obviously, mistrust on the part of the inmates made the administration of the questionnaire difficult, but there were also problems gaining the confidence of the correctional staff. It appears that correctional staff members are disillusioned by the number of questionnaires and surveys they must complete. The inclusion of a small amount of money in the survey by Hackler and Bourgette was intended to convey the message, "We cannot afford to pay you adequately for your help, but please accept this as a token of our appreciation." By keeping the money, cognitive dissonance would be created if the questionnaire was not completed. The payment of the loonie seemed to achieve this goal with the majority of the officers, but several officers were insulted by the gesture. In addition, some of the loonies were stolen from envelopes containing uncompleted questionnaires. The original plan was also to give each inmate $1 with the hope that it would also create cognitive dissonance which could only be resolved by completing the questionnaire. In their discussion with the administration, the researchers were surprised that all of the various strategies of getting $1 to each inmate, or rewarding each inmate unit appropriately, were viewed as unworkable by the administration. The difficulties of accomplishing modest tasks provides an indication of the inability of the Administration to cope with larger issues. Thus, staff received $1 for filling out the questionnaire, inmates did not, and, of course, the inmates were aware of this difference.

Second stage. The original project proposed that intervention exercises (ie. role-playing, group discussions) would accompany the presentation of results as a way of implementing the second stage of the research: the actual reduction of tensions. Pluralistic ignorance among inmates and staff can influence conflict and violence within the institution. The second stage would use the findings of the first stage to reduce that pluralistic ignorance. By presenting the results to both inmates and staff populations at the institution, the goal was to reduce pluralistic ignorance producing tendencies by making people aware of it. The discussions and exercises would attempt to facilitate communication between and among the two groups. The goal would be to reduce misperceptions by allowing individuals to try to understand each other and communicate with each other. Unfortunately because of the general climate and response of the institution to the first stage, and the extended amount of time it took to complete the first stage, the second stage has been abandoned. However, if the prison administration is willing, the researcher would like to follow through on her promise to both interested staff and inmates to present the results of the study to them.

Third stage. The third stage of the project was to involve the re-administration of the questionnaire to the inmate and correctional staff populations in an attempt to measure any changes that may have been effected by the second stage. Additionally, incidents of violence before and after the project implementation were to be compared. However, inmate and staff reactions to the second and third stages were even less positive than their reactions to the first stage, so for obvious reasons since the second stage was abandoned, so was the third stage.

Inaccuracies of the data. Because of the issues surrounding the administration of the questionnaires, it is possible the completed questionnaires were returned by the most cooperative inmates and staff. As a result, it may be that the differences found between the two groups probably underestimate the conflict existing between prison guards and inmates. Furthermore, as was mentioned earlier, when the questionnaires were re-administered, it was primarily inmates in the reception unit who were targeted. Although many of these inmates are seasoned offenders merely returning from a stint on the outside, many are also first-timers to the correctional system and especially to the federal system. Again the implications of this fact point to the same conclusion: an underestimation of conflict within the general population.

The next three chapters discuss the results from the study. The final three chapters discuss the implications of the results for the existence of violence and the reduction of violence at Edmonton Institution.

CHAPTER 5: RESULTS FOR THE 'ANGER MANAGEMENT' and 'LESS CHALLENGING JOB' SCENARIOS

It was hypothesized that pluralistic ignorance does exist among and between staff and inmates at Edmonton Institution. The questionnaire distributed to staff and inmates was meant to measure private attitudes and perceptions of attitudes between and among staff and inmates at the institution. In testing the hypothesis, we were looking for a mismatch between private attitudes and perceptions of these attitudes. In other words, for pluralistic ignorance to exist, there would have to be a gap between the private attitudes of a group, and the perceptions others have of the group. Essentially, we needed to find evidence of misperceptions occuring between inmates and staff members. We did, in fact, find support for the existence of pluralistic ignorance between and among inmates and correctional staff. The following discussion will present these results and perhaps clearly elucidate the existence of pluralistic ignorance at Edmonton Institution.

The first section of this chapter will focus on the results for the 'Anger Management program' scenario. A thorough discussion of the concepts and results for this scenario will pave the way for a clearer understanding of the concepts as they apply to the remaining scenarios. Next, the "Less challenging job" scenario will be discussed using the same format. The Anger Management scenario reads as follows:

> An Anger Management Program is being offered to interested inmates. Inmate Park thinks he could benefit from such a program, even though it's not part of his case plan, so he asks a member of the staff if he can get into the program.

Approval of Inmate Actions

How do inmates and correctional officers personally feel about the inmate's decision to join the Anger Management program? Do they differ or agree?

In the 'Anger Management program' scenario, 90% of inmates approve of the inmate's decision to join the program. As expected, even more of the correctional officers approve of the inmate's decision to join the Anger Management program; 99% think that the inmate should join the program. Both inmates and staff agree that the inmate in the scenario would benefit from joining the Anger Management program, but do staff members and inmates believe that other inmates (or inmates as a group) also agree that the Anger Management program would be useful?

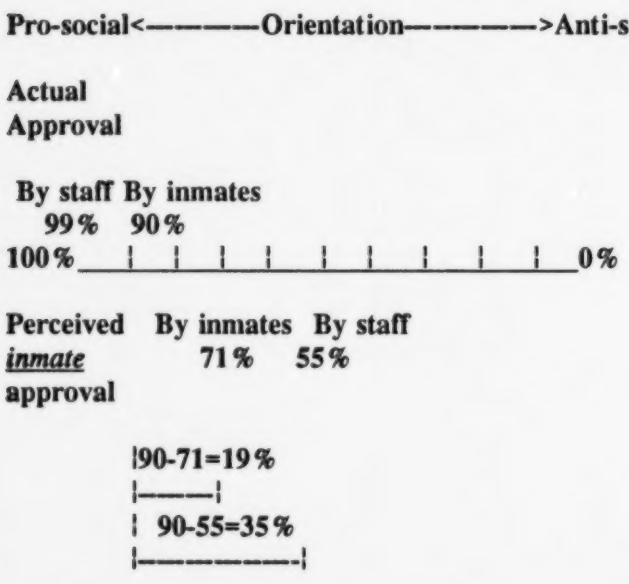
Bias in the Perception of Inmate Approval

How do inmates and correctional staff perceive inmate feelings about the inmate's decision to join the Anger Management program? Do officers and inmates agree on their perceptions of inmate approval for the 'Anger Management program' scenario?

Seventy-one percent of the inmates believe that their fellow inmates would approve of the inmate joining the Anger Management program (their actual approval rate was 90%; 90%-71%=19% gap). Only 55% of correctional staff thought that inmates would approve of the inmate joining the program, a 35% gap (actual inmate approval 90%-55%=35%). That is, staff misperceptions exceeded those of the inmates (35% vs. 19%). While both inmates and staff agree on the desirability of Anger Management (90% and 99% approval, respectively), inmates thought their peers would approve somewhat less, and staff thought inmates would approve a great deal less. Thus, inmates have a somewhat negative view of other inmates, but staff have an even more negative view of inmates.

Figure 5.1 portrays both the direction and degree of bias in the perception of inmate opinion.

Figure 5.1: Orientation of Inmates and Staff to Anger Management Program and Perceived Inmate Approval



From Figure 5.1 it is apparent that both inmates and staff perceive inmates to be more anti-social that they actually are: the percentages for 'perceived inmate approval' lie closer to the anti-social side of the orientation scale, to the right of the Figure, than do actual attitudes. The Figure illustrates the difference (19%) between actual inmate

approval (90%) and inmate perception of inmate approval (71%), as shown by the brackets. From the Figure we can clearly see that staff are more inaccurate and extreme in their misperception of inmate approval (90%-55%=35%).

Does this pattern of pluralistic ignorance occur in the remaining scenarios? Do staff consistently exaggerate the differences in perceptions more so than the inmates? We can use similar logic to confirm the findings discussed above. By asking inmates and staff what they think the inmate should do and what most inmates actually would do, we can measure inmate and staff values and predicted inmate behaviours.

Inmate and CO Prescriptions and Expectations Regarding Inmate Actions

What do inmates and COs think the inmate in the 'Anger Management program' scenario **should** do? What do inmates and COs think **most** inmates **would** do in the 'Anger Management program' scenario?

Prescriptions refer to prescribed behaviour: norms or values for behaviour. What **should** a person do in a certain situation? How **should** he or she behave? What is the proper behaviour according to societal prescriptions? Do inmates and staff agree on certain values and behaviour? Inmates and staff were asked to indicate what they believe the inmate should do in each situation.

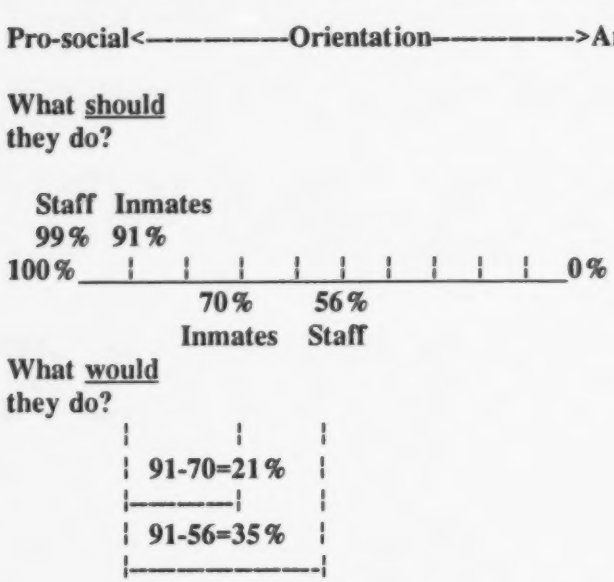
Expectations refer to predicted behaviour. What **would** most inmates do in a particular situation? It is not referring to what they should do, but rather what they probably would do, prescriptions aside. In other words, expectations refer to what they are expected to do in the situation. For the 'Anger Management program' situation, the behaviour referred to is the inmate's decision to join the Anger Management program.

In the 'Anger Management program' scenario, 91% of inmates believe that the inmate **should** join the Anger Management program. When asked what **most** inmates **would** actually do if faced with this situation, 70% of inmate respondents thought that most inmates would join the program. Inmates acknowledge that the pro-social choice should be the desirable choice, they value the norms of conventional society. In this case, most inmates (91%) agree that joining the Anger Management program is the best action for the inmate to take, yet 70% of inmates think that when it comes down to real behaviour, less inmates will join the program. In other words, when it comes to real behaviour, inmates see inmates as less pro-social than they **should** be.

Ninety-eight percent of correctional officers think that the inmate **should** join the program. However, only 56% of correctional officers think that most inmates actually **would** join the Anger Management program. The staff expects inmates to act much less pro-socially than they should. It appears that correctional staff members see inmates in a more negative light than do other inmates. This occurs despite the similarity in what they think inmate should do; 91% of inmates think the inmate should join the program, 99% of staff think he should join the program. Staff and inmates do agree that the pro-social action is the desirable action. Yet, while inmates see other inmates as failing to meet the norms somewhat (91%-70%=21%), staff see them failing even more (91%-56%=35%). When it comes to actual behaviour, inmates

and staff differ in their expectations for inmates. Inmates predict less pro-social behaviour for their fellow inmates, while staff predict **even less** pro-social behaviour for inmates. The relationship between inmate and CO prescriptions and expectations for inmate behaviour is portrayed in Figure 5.2.

Figure 5.2: Inmate and CO Prescriptions and Expectations for Inmate Joining the Anger Management Program



From Figure 2 it appears that staff see inmates in a more anti-social light than inmates see themselves. The difference between what inmates think the inmate should do (91%) and what inmates think most inmates would do (70%) is 21%. The difference between what inmates think the inmate should do (91%) and what staff think most inmates would do (56%) is 35%. Staff see inmates as more anti-social than do inmates themselves. This may not be exactly the same as pluralistic ignorance, but everyone overperceives anti-social attitudes and behaviour. Staff seem to anticipate an even more anti-social position among inmates than do the inmates themselves.

Staff clearly misperceive attitudes and expectations of inmates. Could they also misperceive the attitudes of other staff? For example, staff, in reality, overwhelmingly approve of the Anger Management program, but do they assume that their colleagues are equally as supportive of the program?

In Figures 5.1 and 5.2, I focused on the perception of inmate attitudes. Figure 5.3 adds the perceptions of staff attitudes.

Bias in the Perception of Correctional Staff Approval

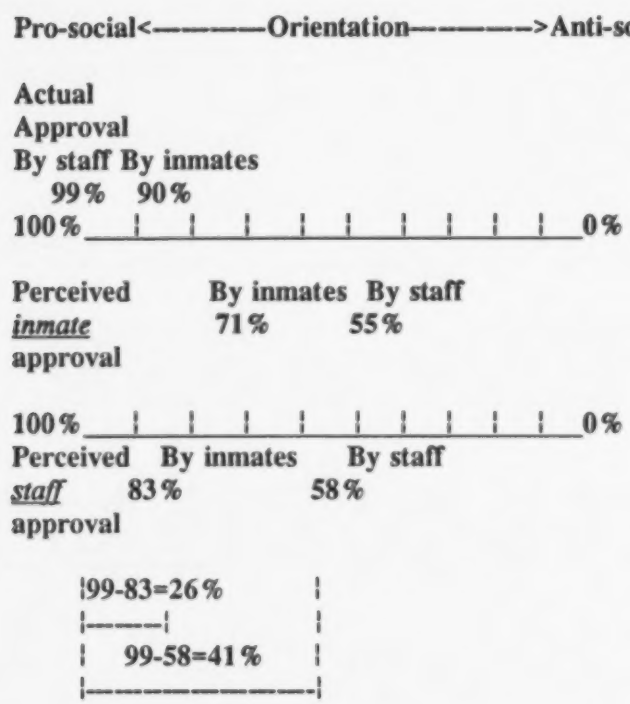
How do inmates and correctional staff perceive correctional officer feelings about the

inmate's decision to join the Anger Management program? Do inmates and officers agree on their perceptions of correctional staff approval for the inmate's decision to join the Anger Management program?

We have seen that staff approve of the Anger Management program and are sceptical of inmate enthusiasm for it. What is their perception of other guards? Do they believe their colleagues approve of Anger Management as wholeheartedly as their 99% approval rate would indicate? Figure 5.3 suggests that they don't perceive their fellow guards as sharing such favorable views. Officers perceive that only 58% of their fellow officers would approve of the inmate joining the Anger Management program (actually 99% approve; thus a 41% gap). Eighty-three percent of inmates thought staff members would approve, a misperception of only 26% (actual staff approval, 99%-83%=26%). That is, *even in estimating the attitudes of their own group, staff members misperceive more than the inmates.* In the 'Anger Management program' situation, inmates more accurately perceive correctional officers' approval than do officers themselves. Staff erroneously believe that their colleagues less than wholeheartedly support the inmate's decision to join the Anger Management program. Pluralistic ignorance is particularly acute among the correctional officers; they see other guards as being more negative than they really are. Inmates also perceive a more negative guard group than actually exists, but the staff exhibit pluralistic ignorance to a greater extent.

In Figure 5.3, the actual approval of inmates and staff for the inmate's decision to join the Anger Management program are shown above the line. Below the line both inmate and staff perceptions of the approval of inmates is shown. In the next line, we have added both inmate and staff perception of the approval of staff.

Figure 5.3: Perceived Inmate and Staff Approval for Inmate's Decision to Join Anger Management Program



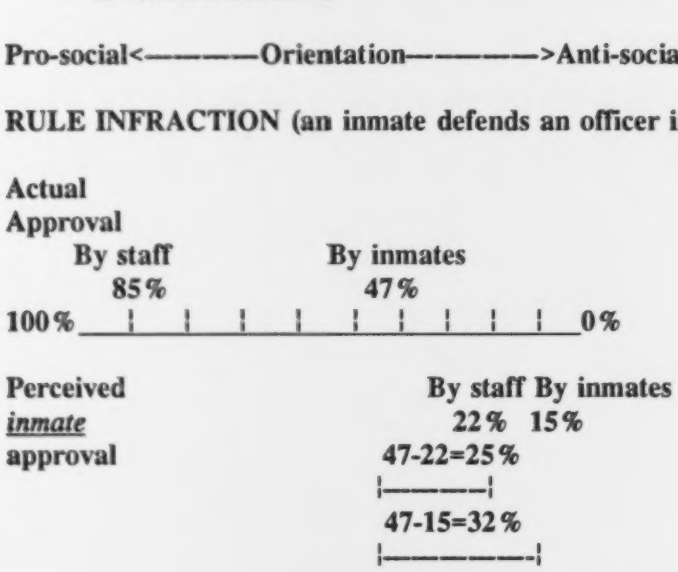
From Figure 5.3 it becomes even more apparent that staff are more inaccurate than inmates in their estimation of opinions even for their own group. While the percent misperception by inmates, regarding correctional staff perceptions, is 26%, for correctional staff it is 41%. Inmates more accurately estimate correctional staff approval of the inmate joining the program than do correctional staff. In estimating inmate and correctional staff perceptions, it is the staff who exaggerate the differences between the two groups the most. In both instances, we can see that on the continuum presented in Figure 5.3, COs' views of inmates and of their colleagues lie closer to the outside, anti-social side of the Figure than do inmates. They perceive both staff and inmates as being more anti-social than they actually are. It is surprising that the staff exaggerate this negative perception to a greater extent than do the inmates. In other words, while pluralistic ignorance exists for both groups, staff exhibit the most pluralistic ignorance. This is reflected in their negative perceptions of the inmate group, but also in their negative, exaggerated perception of their own group, the officer group.

This finding, that it is the staff who exhibit pluralistic ignorance to a greater extent than inmates, is particularly interesting because it differs from the findings of Wheeler's study. Wheeler found that the inmates in his study were the most affected by pluralistic ignorance in that they held the most negative and exaggerated

misperceptions. The data from the present study indicate that staff are *even more inaccurate* in their estimations of inmate perceptions than inmates are; they view inmates as worse than they really are. Even more significant is the fact that the staff members perceived their own group, the guard group, to be more anti-social than inmates. This is contrary to Wheeler's results which indicate that **inmates** are the more extreme and more negative of the two groups in their misperception of attitudes.

As an example of Wheeler's findings, Figure 5.4, similar to the figures presented above, presents his results. This example from Wheeler's study is representative of his findings in general and clearly demonstrates how the findings differ. While the present study found that staff members are more negative in their misperceptions, Wheeler found that the inmates were more extreme and negative in misperceiving group opinion.

Figure 5.4: An Example of Wheeler's Results - The Rule Infraction Scenario



From Wheeler's example we can see that similar tendencies occur both in his study and in the present study: pluralistic ignorance exists. Different however, is the fact that in the example taken from his study (Figure 5.4) it is the inmates who are lying on the more anti-social edge of the continuum. Essentially, in Wheeler's findings, the inmates are most affected by pluralistic ignorance; they exaggerate the misperceptions between the two groups the most and are most extreme, most negative, in their misperceptions of inmate opinion.

In the 'Anger Management program' scenario discussed above, correctional staff are nearer to the more anti-social edge in the figures. While the differences in privately expressed attitudes are large, the differences in perception of inmate attitudes

> the image of an inmate society guided by norms hostile to those of staff members receives only partial support when differences in *private expectations* are reviewed, but it appears to operate clearly and strongly in guiding the *perceptions* of inmate standards. (Wheeler, 1961: 240)

Different from Wheeler's study however is the finding in this study that it is the correctional staff who are more extreme in their "mis"-perception of inmate opinion. Wheeler found that it was the **inmates** who - more so than staff - exaggerated the difference between staff and themselves. In each of Wheeler's scenarios, the inmates consistently lie further removed from staff norms than staff: inmates are most likely to perceive inmate standards for behaviour to be greatly different from staff norms. In the present study however, it is the **staff** who are most extreme in their misperceptions. Does this tendency for staff to exaggerate their misperceptions most hold for the remaining scenarios? The findings for the 'Less challenging job' scenario are discussed next.

Results for the 'Less Challenging Job' scenario

Discussion of the results for the 'Less challenging job' scenario follow the same pattern as those just discussed for the 'Anger Management program' scenario. The 'Less challenging job' scenario reads as follows:

> Inmate Scott has put in a request for a job change. He is offered two choices for a new job. One position would mean he would have less work to do than he has now. The job would be boring, but it would mean he could work with some of his friends. The other job he is offered is more challenging and it would help prepare him for a good job once he is released from prison. He takes the less challenging job.

Approval of Inmate Actions

How do inmates and correctional officers personally feel about the inmate choosing the less challenging job?

In the 'Less challenging job' scenario, where the inmate decides to take the less challenging job (the anti-social response) rather than a more difficult one that would provide valuable training for work on the outside, only 28% of inmates approve of the action. Even fewer officers (6%) approve of the inmate taking the less challenging job.

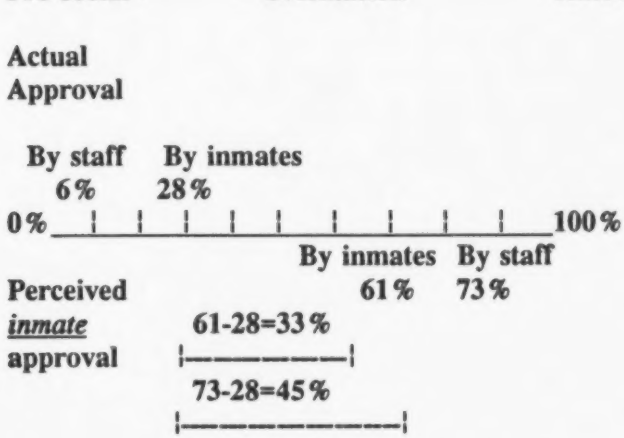
Bias in the Perception of Inmate Approval

How do inmates and correctional staff perceive inmate feelings about the inmate taking the less challenging job? Do inmates and officers agree in their perceptions of inmate approval for the 'Less challenging job' scenario?

Inmates perceive that 61% of inmates would approve of the inmate making the anti-social choice by taking the less challenging job (actually 28% approve, so 33% misperceived). Staff perceive that 73% of inmates would make the anti-social choice, a 'mis-estimation' of 45% (staff perception of inmate approval, 73% - 28%, actual inmate approval = 45%). Both inmates and staff display pluralistic ignorance: they inaccurately perceive inmate support for the anti-social action. But, again, it is the staff who have a more negative perception of inmates than do inmates; staff think more inmates would choose the "easy way out" than do inmates. While both inmates and staff are in reasonable agreement that the inmate should avoid the easier job (28% and 6% respectively), inmates thought most of their peers would take the easier job (61%). Even more staff thought inmates would take the job which would provide less training (73%).

Figure 5.5 portrays both the direction and degree of bias in the perception of inmate opinion.

Figure 5.5: Orientation of Inmates and Staff to Inmate Taking the Less Challenging Job and Perceived Inmate Approval



The difference between actual inmate approval and inmate perception of that approval, or degree of misperception, is 33% (61%-28%). For the staff it is 45% (73%-28%=45%). The gaps between actual approval and perceptions of that approval are

scenario. In other words, in the case of the 'Less challenging job' scenario, pluralistic ignorance is greater than it was for the 'Anger Management program' scenario. Interestingly, Wheeler used a scenario similar to the 'Less challenging job' situation used in this study (Wheeler's inmate similarly chooses the less challenging job). In Wheeler's scenario, the difference between actual inmate approval (31%) and inmate perception of inmate approval (54%) is 23%. In other words for this similar scenario in Wheeler's study, inmates experience 23% misperception. The difference between actual inmate approval (31%) and officer perception of inmate approval (54%) is 23%. So the difference is the same, 23% for both inmates and staff. But in the present study the differences between inmates and staff (33% and 45%, respectively) are much larger than the differences in Wheeler's study. And again, it is the staff at Edmonton Institution who are exhibiting even more pluralistic ignorance than the inmates. An analysis of what staff and inmates think inmates should and would do provides further evidence of the existence of pluralistic ignorance at Edmonton Institution.

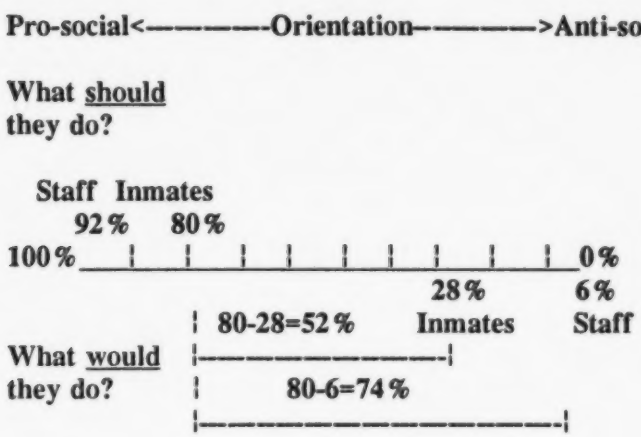
Inmate and Correctional Officer Prescriptions and Expectations Regarding Inmate Actions

What do inmates and COs think the inmate in the 'Less challenging job' scenario **should** do? What do inmates and COS think **most** inmates would do in the 'Less challenging job' scenario?

For this section, the action being referred to is the decision to take the more challenging job, the pro-social choice. For this scenario, 80% of inmates think that the inmate **should** take the more challenging job while only 28% of inmates think that most inmates **would** actually take the more challenging job. Inmates expect other inmates to be more anti-social than they **should** be. The difference between prescriptions and expected behaviour in this case is 52% (80%-28%=52%). Again, with the 'Less challenging job' scenario, we see evidence of pluralistic ignorance among inmates.

Ninety-two percent of correctional staff members think that the inmate **should** take the more challenging job. However, only 6% of officers think that most inmates actually **would** take the more challenging job. The difference between the two is an extreme 86% (92%-6%=86%). While this is not identical to pluralistic ignorance, the staff expect much anti-social behaviour compared to staff norms (92%-6%=86%), compared to inmate norms (80%-6%=74%) and even compared to inmate expectations (28%-6%=22%). Correctional staff members are almost unanimous in thinking that, in terms of real behaviour, few inmates would actually take the more challenging job. The difference between prescribed and expected behaviour according to inmates is large (52%), but still significantly less than the difference for correctional staff (74%). Figure 5.6 illustrates these relationships more clearly.

Figure 5.6: Inmate and CO Prescriptions and Expectations for Inmate Taking the Less Challenging Job



As with the 'Anger Management program' scenario, correctional staff seem to expect less pro-social inmate behaviour than do inmates. Staff see inmates more negatively than inmates see themselves. This difference exists even though the two groups share somewhat similar prescriptions for behaviour (80% of inmates think the inmate should take the more challenging job, 92% of staff feel the same way). As with the 'Anger Management program' scenario, the "Less challenging job' scenario provides evidence for the existence of pluralistic ignorance among both inmates and staff when it comes to estimating inmate approval of the inmate's decision to take the less challenging job.

But, again, we are led to ask: what happens when inmates and staff are asked to estimate staff approval of the inmate's decision to choose the less challenging job? What do inmates and staff think that staff think about the inmate's decision to choose the less challenging job?

Bias in the Perception of Correctional Staff Approval

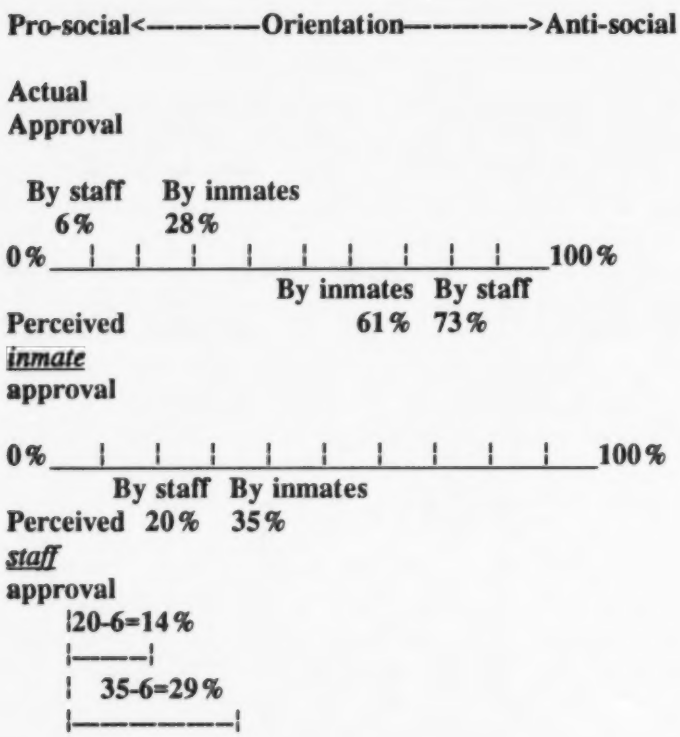
How do inmates and correctional staff perceive correctional officer feelings about the inmate's decision to choose the less challenging job? Do inmates and officers agree in their perceptions of correctional staff approval for the 'Less challenging job' scenario?

From the above discussion, it is apparent that COs are almost unanimous in thinking that the inmate should not choose the anti-social action by taking the less challenging job (only 6% approve). But what do COs think that their fellow COs think about the action taken in the situation? Twenty percent of correctional officers believe that their colleagues would approve of the inmate taking the less challenging job (actually 6% approve, hence a 14% misperception). Correctional officers perceive other officers in a more negative, "anti-inmate" light than their private attitudes

indicate. However, 35% of inmates estimate that COs would approve of the inmate's decision to take the less challenging job (35%-6%,actual staff approval=29% misperception). So in this instance inmates are more inaccurate and negative in their perception of staff attitudes.

Figure 5.7 includes the information presented in Figure 5.5 as well as the percentages for perceived staff approval discussed above.

Figure 5.7: Perceived Inmate and Staff Approval for Inmate's Decision to Take the Less Challenging Job



From Figure 5.7 we can more clearly see the relationship between staff and inmate perceptions. The findings for this scenario differ from those for the 'Anger Management program' scenario in that the **inmates** in this case hold the more negative perception of staff, even though it is the **staff** who are more extreme in their misperception of inmate approval. The results are similar to the 'Anger Management program' scenario in that for the perceptions of inmate opinion, staff are more negative than inmates.

Inmate responses to the two scenarios.

The 'Anger Management program' and 'Less challenging job' scenarios deal with inmate behaviour that concerns only the inmate in question, and has no

consequence for those around him. Inmate responses for these two scenarios reveal an important characteristic of inmate behaviour. It appears from the results that when the inmate action in question **does not** have a direct effect on other inmates, discretion is left up to the individual inmate; there are no set rules for behaviour among the inmate population in these circumstances. For example, in the 'Anger Management program' scenario, in which the inmate joins the program, even though it's not part of his case plan, 90% of the inmates approve of the action. Many inmates commented that "it's none of my business", yet they still chose the pro-social action.

Similarly, in the 'Less challenging job' scenario, where the inmate decides to take the less challenging job rather than a more difficult one that would provide valuable training for work on the outside, only 28% of inmates agree with this anti-social choice. Yet inmates estimated that 61% of their peers would approve of the inmate's choice. This discrepancy may be due to the uncertainty among inmates regarding appropriate behaviour in areas where 'the code' loses jurisdiction. Some of the other scenarios which will be discussed later are clearly examples of 'ratting' within the inmate population. The inmate code for behaviour addresses the issue in no uncertain terms: 'do not rat'. However, choosing a more or less challenging job is of less concern to the inmate population as a whole and therefore is not addressed by the inmate code. So, as is evident above, inmates may be 'off' in their perception of how inmates would react.

It seems that in the two situations where inmates can feel safe in acting independently, most inmates acknowledge that following conventional norms is in the best interest of the inmate. In other words, they favour the more pro-social action when they feel sure that their behaviour will not directly affect other inmates and therefore will not incur any negative response from the inmate population. According to Wheeler's findings, "the inmate role is not consistently defined in opposition to staff standards. Private expectations tend toward the norms of staff members in situations where individual decisions are unlikely to have any adverse effect on other inmates" (Wheeler, 1961: 236). However, private responses do not necessarily translate into similar behaviour. As we shall see later, powerful group processes operate to inhibit the expression of conventional values, and to encourage other, more anti-social behaviour.

These processes are evident in the fact that there is a high degree of agreement between the inmate and officer groups in their perception of inmate standards for behaviour. It appears that inmates and correctional staff are perceiving the same social world. They are very aware of what is and what is not considered acceptable behaviour in terms of the standards and expectations of the inmate population. This occurs despite the differences in the official roles occupied by the members of the two groups. In general, perceptions of inmate approval are in marked opposition to staff norms. The perception by both groups is that inmates are strongly opposed to staff norms.

The following chapter will examine the results for the remaining four scenarios which feature inmates as the central characters.

CHAPTER 6: RESULTS FOR THE REMAINING FOUR SCENARIOS

The previous chapter presented and discussed the findings for two of the scenarios, the 'Anger Management program' and 'Less challenging job' situations. Four other scenarios featuring inmates as central characters were also presented in the questionnaire and the results for these remaining scenarios are discussed in this chapter. The data for these four scenarios support the findings discussed in Chapter 5.

The issues concerning the characters in the scenarios are meant to deal with aspects of inmate behaviour that seem to come under some sort of normative regulation by both inmates and staff (Wheeler, 1961: 234). Unlike the 'Anger Management program' and 'Less challenging job' scenarios however, these four scenarios deal with situations where the inmate character's behaviour affects the situation of other inmates. Because these behaviours affect the situation of other inmates, we expect that 'the code' has more jurisdiction in these areas. First, the results for the 'Escape' scenario are discussed. The scenario reads as follows:

> Inmates Smith and Brown are planning an escape. They need a third person to help them by hiding a pair of wirecutters. They ask Inmate Jones who is also in their Unit. Inmate Jones refuses to help, saying he wants nothing to do with their plan because he is scared of getting caught.

Approval of Inmate Actions

How do inmates and correctional officers personally feel about the inmate's refusal to help with the escape? Do they differ or agree?

In the 'escape' scenario, 61% of inmates approve of the inmate's refusal to help in the escape. On the other hand, 97% of correctional staff approve of the inmate's refusal to help. The percent difference in approval between inmates and correctional staff is 36%, so essentially there is a large difference in opinion between inmates and staff regarding the inmate's refusal to help in the escape. Predictably, correctional officers indicate more support for the inmate's decision not to help another inmate escape. Having established this difference in personal opinions between inmates and staff, we can now ask how the two groups perceive the inmate group to feel about the inmate's refusal to help in the escape.

Bias in the Perception of Inmate Approval

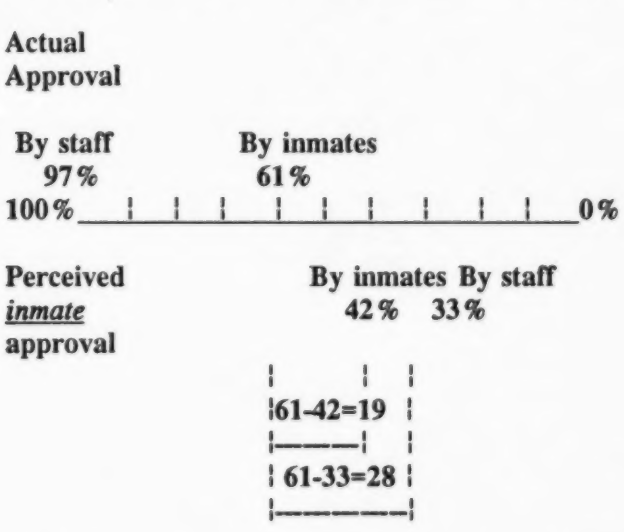
How do inmates and correctional staff perceive inmate feelings about the inmate's refusal to help in the escape? Do officers and inmates agree in their perception of inmate

approval for the 'escape' scenario?

In the 'escape' scenario, 42% of inmates believe that their fellow inmates would approve of the inmate's refusal to help in the escape (their actual approval rate is 61%, so 61%-42% = 19% gap). Only 33% of correctional staff thought that inmates would approve of the inmate refusing to help in the escape (actual inmate approval, 61%-33%=28% gap). That is, staff misperceived more than inmates (28% vs. 19%). This follows the pattern established in the 'Anger Mangement program' scenario. While staff and inmates do differ in their private approval of the inmate's refusal to help in the escape (97% vs. 61%), inmates perceive that fewer inmates would approve of the pro-social action taken by the inmate (refusal to help in the escape), but staff think even less inmates would approve of the inmate's pro-social action. Inmates have a negative view of their own group, but guards have a more negative impression of the inmate group. Guards agree that the inmate should not help in the escape (97%) but only a third of the guards perceive that inmates would also approve of the inmate's refusal to participate in the escape.

Figure 6.1 portrays both the direction and degree of bias in the perception of inmate opinion.

Figure 6.1: Orientation of Inmates and Staff to Inmate's Refusal to Participate in the Escape and Perceived Inmate Approval for the Action



From Figure 6.1 it is obvious that even though the majority of inmates give pro-social responses (61%), both inmates and staff perceive inmate opinion to lie to the right of the Figure, toward the anti-social end of the continuum. The brackets illustrate the differences between inmate and staff perceptions of inmate approval and actual inmate

approval of the inmate's refusal to help in the escape. As in the case of the 'Anger Management program' scenario and the 'Less challenging job' scenario, it is the staff who are more inaccurate in their estimation of inmate attitudes. By finding out what inmates and staff think the inmate should do and what most inmates would do, the exaggerated misperceptions between inmates and staff should become even more obvious.

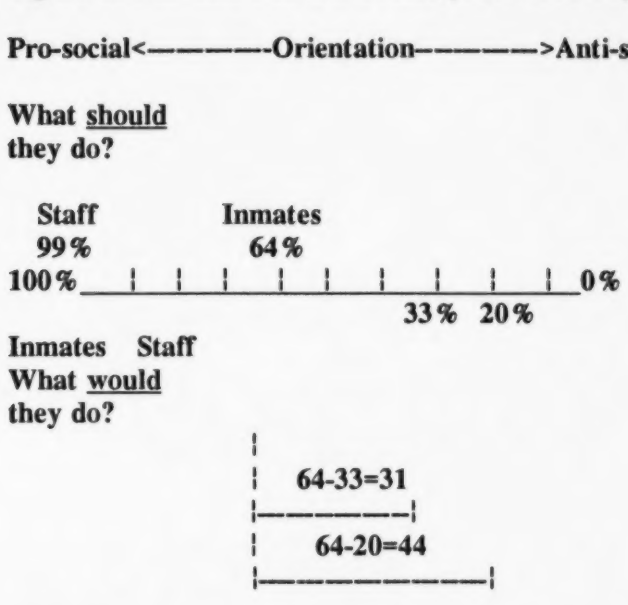
Inmate and CO Prescriptions and Expectations Regarding Inmate Actions

What do inmates and COs think the inmate in the 'Escape' scenario **should** do? What do inmates and COs think **most** inmates would do in the 'Escape' scenario?

Do inmates and staff agree on certain values and behaviours? Or do they agree on one and disagree on the other? In the 'Escape' scenario, 64% of inmates believe that the inmate **should** refuse to help in the escape. But when asked what **most** inmates actually **would** do if faced with this situation, only 33% of inmates thought that most inmates would refuse to help in the escape. In the case of the 'Escape' situation a majority of inmates (64%) agree that the pro-social action is the desirable choice, but admit that most inmates would not take the pro-social action when it comes to actual behaviour (only 33% would actually refuse to help in the escape). When it comes to real behaviour, inmates see inmates as less pro-social than they **should** be.

Ninety-nine percent of correctional officers think that the inmate **should** refuse to help another inmate escape. Only 20% of officers think that **most** inmates actually **would** refuse to help. In other words while officers are unanimous in believing the inmate should choose the pro-social action, only 20% believe that most inmates would actually act pro-socially in the situation. Staff have a very negative perception of inmate behaviour. Inmates see other inmates in a negative light, but staff see inmates much more negatively. Figure 6.2 presents the relationship between inmate and CO prescriptions and expectations for inmate behaviour.

Figure 6.2: Inmate and CO Prescriptions and Expectations for Inmate Behaviour



From Figure 6.2 we can see that inmates and staff both perceive inmate behaviour (what would they do) to be more anti-social (to the right of the Figure) than actual inmate values (what should they do) indicate. But again, as with the 'Anger Managment program' scenario and the 'Less challenging job' scenario, it is the staff who exaggerate this gap between norms and expectations the most. Inmates see a 31% gap, as illustrated by the bracket in the diagram. Staff, however, see a 44% gap. Again, inmates do not have much faith in the actual behaviour of fellow inmates (they think only 33% would act pro-socially), but staff have even less faith in inmate behaviour (they think only 20% would act pro-socially).

Other studies suggest that people claim they would act somewhat according to the norms they state (Barth et al. 1966). I suspect, however, that actual behaviour would be closer to their expectations for others.

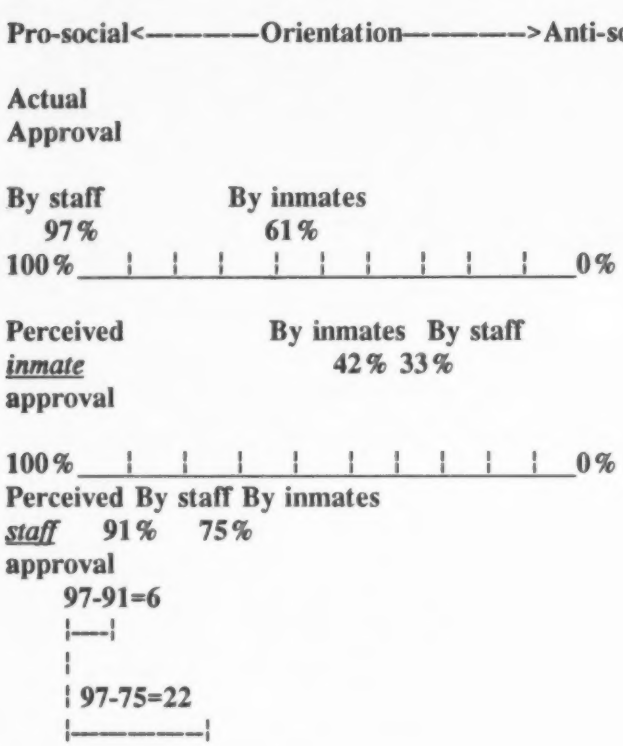
Bias in the Perception of Correctional Staff Approval

How do inmates and correctional staff perceive correctional officer feelings about the inmate's refusal to help another inmate to escape? Do inmates and officers agree on their perceptions of correctional staff approval for the inmate's refusal to help in the escape attempt?

We have seen that staff approve of the inmate's refusal to help in the escape but are sceptical of inmate enthusiasm for the refusal to help. How about their perception of other guards? Do they believe their colleagues approve of the inmate's refusal to participate in the escape attempt as wholeheartedly as their 97% approval

rate would indicate? It seems that they do perceive their fellow guards as favoring the pro-social response. Guards believe that 91% of their fellow guards would favor the inmate's refusal to help in the escape (97% actually approve, so 97%-91%=6% gap). Seventy-five percent of inmates perceive that officers would approve of the inmate's refusal to help in the escape (actual CO approval, 97%-75%=22% gap). So in this case, it is the inmates who are more negative and inaccurate in their estimation of CO opinion. Figure 6.3 includes the information presented in Figure 6.1 as well as the percentages for perceived staff approval discussed above.

Figure 6.3: Perceived Inmate and Staff Approval for Inmate's Decision to Refuse to Participate in the Escape



From Figure 6.3 we can clearly see the relationship between staff and inmate perceptions of staff approval. Inmates see staff more negatively than staff see themselves. In other words inmates are experiencing more misperceptions than are staff; inmates exhibit more pluralistic ignorance than staff when it comes to estimating staff perceptions of staff behaviour.

The results for the 'Drugs' scenario will be discussed next. Again evidence of pluralistic ignorance among inmates and staff reinforces the argument made with the 'Anger Management program' scenario.

> Inmate Johnson received some drugs during one of his visits. He was able to get the drugs past the correctional officers, but thinks they are now suspicious of him. He asks Inmate Schwartz to keep the drugs for him until things calm down. Inmate Schwartz agrees to keep the drugs.

Approval of Inmate Actions

How do inmates and correctional officers personally feel about the inmate's decision to hide the drugs? Do they differ or agree?

In the 'Drugs' scenario, 52% of inmates approve of the inmate's decision to hide the drugs. On the other hand, only a small minority (3%) of correctional staff approve of the inmate's action. The percent difference in approval between inmates and correctional staff is 49%; there is a significant difference in opinion between inmates and staff regarding the inmate's decision to hide the drugs. Predictably, correctional officers indicate less support for the inmate's decision to help a fellow inmate by hiding the drugs. Having established this difference in personal opinions between inmates and staff, we can now ask how the two groups perceive inmate feelings about the inmate's decision to hide the drugs for a fellow inmate.

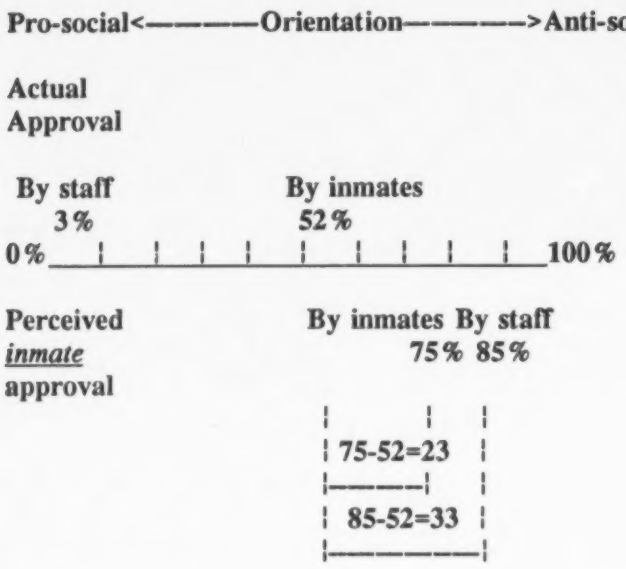
Bias in the Perception of Inmate Approval

How do inmates and correctional staff perceive inmate feelings about the inmate's decision to hide the drugs? Do officers and inmates agree in their perception of inmate approval for the 'Drugs' scenario?

In the 'Drugs' scenario, 75% of inmates believe that their fellow inmates would approve of the inmate's decision to hide the drugs for a fellow inmate (their actual approval rate is 52%, so 75%-52%=23% gap). Eighty-five percent of correctional staff thought that inmates would approve of the inmate's decision to hide the drugs (85%-52%,actual inmate approval=33% gap). That is, staff misperceived more than inmates (33% vs. 23%). This follows the pattern established in the three previously discussed scenarios. Inmates have a negative impression of inmates as a group, but staff have an even more negative impression of inmates.

Figure 6.4 portrays both the direction and degree of bias in the perception of inmate opinion.

Figure 6.4: Orientation of Inmates and Staff to Inmate's Decision to Hide the Drugs and Perceived Inmate Approval of the Action



Inmates and staff both exhibit pluralistic ignorance, but again, the staff are more extreme and negative in their misperceptions. By looking at the brackets in the Figure, we can see that staff misperceptions (33%) of inmate approval are more extreme and negative than inmate misperceptions (23%). The data for prescriptions and expectations for inmates confirm these findings. Wheeler used a similar scenario in his study (he used money instead of drugs as the contraband material). Wheeler's staff exhibit much less pluralistic ignorance (CO perception of inmate approval, 74%-61%, actual inmate approval=13% gap) than do the staff in the present study (85%-52%=33% gap). Wheeler's inmates exhibit a similar amount of pluralistic ignorance (inmate perception of inmate approval, 83%-61%, actual inmate approval= 22% gap) as do the inmates in the present study (75%-52%=23% gap).

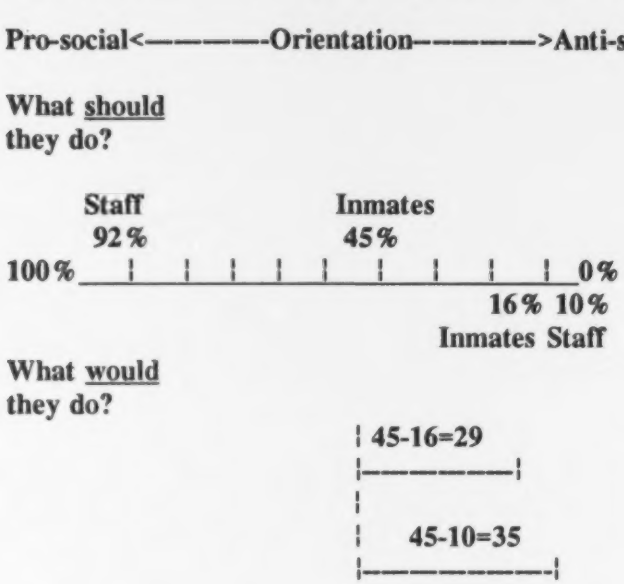
Inmate and CO Prescriptions and Expectations Regarding Inmate Actions

What do inmates and COs think the inmate in the 'Drugs' scenario **should** do? What do inmates and COs think **most** inmates would do in the 'Drugs' scenario?

Forty-five percent of inmates think that the inmate **should** not keep the drugs for another inmate. But only 14% of inmates think that **most** inmates actually would refuse to keep the drugs for another inmate. On the other hand, 92% of correctional officers think the inmate **should** not keep the drugs for another inmate, while only 10% think that **most** inmates actually would refuse to keep the drugs as a favor to

another inmate. These differences are presented in Figure 6.5.

Figure 6.5: Inmate and CO Prescriptions and Expectations for Inmate Behaviour



By looking at the brackets in Figure 6.5 we can see that the biggest difference (35%) occurs between inmate prescriptions (45%) and staff expectations for inmate behaviour (10%). Staff see a greater gap between actual inmate norms and expected behaviour. Let us now turn to how inmates and COs perceive other CO feelings about the inmate's decision to hide the drugs for a fellow inmate.

Bias in the Perception of Correctional Staff Approval

How do inmates and correctional staff perceive correctional officer feelings about the inmate's decision to hide drugs for a fellow inmate? Do inmates and officers agree on their perceptions of correctional staff approval for the inmate's decision to hide the drugs in the 'Drugs' scenario?

The data indicate that COs are accurate in their perceptions of how their fellow COs feel about the inmate's decision to hide the drugs. COs perceive that only 8% of their fellow COs would approve of the inmate's decision to hide the drugs for another inmate (8%-3% actual approval=5% gap). Inmates also estimate that 8% of COs would approve of the inmate's decision to hide the drugs (8%-3%=5%). Both inmates and staff are fairly accurate in estimating CO disapproval of hiding drugs. The results are presented in Figure 6.6.

Figure 6.6: Perceived Inmate and Staff Approval for Inmate's Decision to Hide the Drugs

Pro-social<————Orientation————>Anti-social

Actual Approval

By staff 3%

By inmates 52%

0% ¦ ¦ ¦ ¦ ¦ ¦ ¦ ¦ ¦ ¦ **100%**

Perceived *inmate* approval

By inmates 75% **By staff 85%**

0% ¦ ¦ ¦ ¦ ¦ ¦ ¦ ¦ ¦ ¦ **100%**

Perceived *staff* approval

By inmates/By staff
8%

¦–¦
8-3=5

The amount of pluralistic ignorance in this situation is small. The results for the 'Riot' scenario and 'Knife fight' scenario are presented in tables rather than in the format used for the previous scenarios. The tables include the results for all of the scenarios discussed up to this point.

'Riot' scenario:

> Several influential inmates are talking about and spreading the word around about having a riot. Inmate Wagner is afraid of what is happening and doesn't like the idea of a riot occurring. He goes to a correctional officer and tells him about what's been going on.

'Knife fight' scenario

> Inmate Smith gets cut in a knife fight with another inmate. Smith is called before a disciplinary committee. The committee asks him to tell them who he was fighting with. He refuses to name the other inmate.

Table 6.1: Perceived Inmate Approval and Direction of Pluralistic Ignorance

Scenario	Pluralistic Ignorance for Inmates[1]	Pluralistic Ignorance for Staff[2]	Direction of Pluralistic Ignorance[3]
Anger. Mangmnt	(90-71) 19%	(90-55) 35%	-16%
Less Ch. Job	(61-28) 33%	(73-28) 45%	-12%
Escape	(61-42) 19%	(61-33) 28%	-9%
Drugs	(75-52) 23%	(85-52) 33%	-10%
Riot	(22-16) 6%	(24-22) 2%	+4%
Knife fight	(91-85) 6%	(94-85) 9%	-3%

[1]This is the difference between inmate approval and inmate perception of inmate approval.
[2]This is the difference between inmate approval and staff perception of inmate approval.
[3]PI indicates the degree of pluralistic ignorance experienced between the groups. The - means that it is the correctional staff who exaggerate the differences more; the + means that it is the inmates who exaggerate to a greater extent.

From Table 6.1 we can see that in five out of the six scenarios it is the staff group that exhibits more pluralistic ignorance than the inmates. The 'Riot' scenario is the only exception to this tendency. Here the inmates are more inaccurate in their estimation of inmate approval for the inmate's decision to inform an officer of the riot plans. The 'Anger Management program' scenario results in the most pluralistic ignorance (16%). The 'Knife fight' scenario results in the least amount of pluralistic ignorance (3%). The following discussion attempts to account for these differences. In general the magnitude of the pluralistic ignorance is greater in the present study than in Wheeler's study. The results of his study are presented in Table 6.2.

Table 6.2: Wheeler's Results for Perceived Inmate Approval and Direction of Pluralistic Ignorance

Scenario	Pluralistic Ignorance for Inmates	Pluralistic Ignorance for Staff	Direction of Pluralistic Ignorance[a]
Therapy[1]	(99-63) 36%	(99-59) 40%	-4%
Classification[2]	(54-31) 23%	(54-31) 23%	0%
Escape[3]	(30-8) 22%	(30-9) 21%	+1%
Money[4]	(83-61) 22%	(74-61) 13%	+9%
Knifing[5]	(91-89) 2%	(91-89) 2%	0%
Rule Infraction	(47-15) 32%	(47-22) 25%	+7%

[a]PI indicates the degree of pluralistic ignorance experienced between the groups. The - means that it is the correctional staff who exaggerate the differences more; the + means that it is the inmates who exaggerate to a greater extent.

[1] Similar to the Anger Management program scenario.
[2] Similar to the Less Challenging job scenario.
[3] Similar to the Escape scenario.
[4] Similar to the Drugs scenario.
[5] Similar to the Knife fight scenario.

As was mentioned in the discussions above, in Wheeler's study it is the inmates who exaggerate the misperceptions the most. From Table 6.2 we can see that with the exception of one scenario, the inmates in Wheeler's study are consistently exaggerating the misperceptions the most. More interesting is that the magnitude of pluralistic ignorance in Wheeler's scenarios is generally smaller than in the present study. His results for pluralistic ignorance range from 0% to 9%. In the present study the range is from 3% to 16%, with four of the six scenarios resulting in pluralistic ignorance near or above the 10% mark. Obviously there were very different processes occuring among the inmates and staff in his study compared to the present study.

Table 6.3 present the gaps in prescriptions and expectations for the present study. No similar information is available for Wheeler's study.

Table 6.3: Gaps Between Prescriptions and Expectations and the Direction of Difference for Inmates and Staff

Gaps between Prescriptions and Expectations

Scenario	Inmates[1]	Staff[2]	Direction of Difference[3]
Anger Managmnt	(91-70) 21%	(91-56) 35%	-14%
Less Chal. Job	(80-28) 52%	(80-6) 74%	-22%
Escape	(64-33) 31%	(64-20) 44%	-13%
Drugs	(45-16) 29%	(45-10) 35%	-6%
Riot	(26-11) 15%	(26-22) 4%	+11%
Knife Fight	(10-9) 1%	(10-1) 9%	-8%

[1]This is the difference between what inmates think inmates should do and what inmates think inmates would do.
[2]This is the difference between what inmates think inmates should do and what staff think inmates would do.
[3]The - means that it is the correctional staff who exaggerate the differences more; the + means that it is the inmates who exaggerate to a greater extent.

With the exception of the 'Riot' scenario, staff experience the largest gap between norms and expected inmate behaviour. In other words staff expect inmates to behave much worse than they should behave. The largest gap is in the 'Less challenging job' scenario (-22%). Staff have very low expectations that the inmate would choose the more challenging job even though that is what he should do. The smallest gap is in the 'Drugs' scenario. Few officers think that most inmates would refuse to hide drugs for a friend. Inmates feel the same way, thus the small gap. Few staff and fewer inmates think that most inmates would report the riot plans to an officer. Inmates are more inaccurate in their estimation, thus the 'Riot' scenario is the exception to the rule.

Table 6.4 presents the direction of pluralistic ignorance for perceived staff approval among inmates and staff. In general, inmates are more inaccurate than staff, perceiving staff in a more negative light than their attitudes warrant.

Table 6.4: Perceived Staff Approval and Degree and Direction of Pluralistic Ignorance

Scenario	Pluralistic Ignorance for Inmates[1]	Pluralistic Ignorance for Staff[2]	Direction of Pluralistic Ignorance[3]
Anger Mangmnt.	(99-83) 26%	(99-58) 41%	-15%
Less Ch. Job	(35-6) 29%	(20-6) 14%	+15%
Escape	(97-91) 6%	(97-75) 22%	+16%
Drugs	(8-3) 5%	(8-3) 5%	0%
Riot	(100-80)20%	(100-94) 6%	+14%
Knife fight	(23-19) 4%	(32-19) 13%	-9%

[1]This is the difference between staff approval and inmate perception of staff approval.
[2]This is the difference between staff approval and staff perception of staff approval.
[3]PI indicates the degree of pluralistic ignorance experienced between the groups. The - means that it is the correctional staff who exaggerate the differences more; the + means that it is the inmates who exaggerate to a greater extent.
Note: Wheeler asked neither inmates nor staff to estimate staff approval for the scenarios featuring inmates as central characters, thus there is no corresponding "Wheeler" table for this table.

With the exception of the 'Anger Management program' scenario, the 'Knife fight' scenario, and the 'Drugs' scenario, where the groups share the same amount of pluralistic ignorance, staff more accurately estimate their fellow staff members' attitudes than do inmates. As with Table 6.1, the amount of pluralistic ignorance is large. Both inmates and staff do not seem to really know what other staff members are thinking and how they would react to certain circumstances.

Thus staff exhibit more pluralistic ignorance with regard to inmate opinions, and inmates exhibit more pluralistic ignorance with regard to staff opinions.

Inmate and Staff Responses to the Scenarios

The issues concerning the characters in the scenarios are meant to deal with aspects of inmate behaviour that seem to come under some sort of normative regulation by both inmates and staff (Wheeler, 1961: 234). Unlike the 'Anger Management program' and 'Less challenging job' scenarios however, these four scenarios deal with situations where the inmate character's behaviour affects the situation of other inmates.

Inmate responses reveal several important characteristics of inmate behaviour. When an inmate's behaviour has consequences for other inmates he will choose the action that has the fewest negative consequences for his fellow inmates. For example, in the 'Knife fight' scenario, 85% of inmates indicated approval of the inmate's refusal to name the other inmate involved in the fight. Inmates protect each other and follow the maxim "Don't rat". In the 'Riot' scenario, where the inmate 'ratted' by telling the correctional officer about the riot plans, only 22% of inmates approved of the action. In both cases, it appears that the majority of inmates approve of an action, even if it is anti-social in nature, if it means helping or protecting a fellow inmate. Inmate loyalty is more important to inmates than keeping their own conduct records clean, or at least risking the possibility of getting into trouble. But there is also a norm for minding your own business. The 'Drugs' and 'Escape' scenarios get a more ambivalent response. The inmate in the 'Drug' scenario agrees to hide another inmate's drugs for awhile. Fifty-two percent of inmates approved of this action. In the 'Escape' scenario a modest majority of inmates (61%) indicate approval of the inmate's refusal to help another inmate. This result may be because an escape is more dangerous than the other actions in question, and because the consequences are more severe (increased security, loss of good time). Additionally, many inmates indicated that it was unclear whether the inmate being asked for help was a friend or not. It seems that if the inmates are friends, there is more of an obligation to help than if they are not friends (Bell et al., 1995). Also, the fact that the inmate refused to help because he was scared seemed to reduce expectations among the inmates (ie. being scared was understandable and therefore excusable).

However, as was evident with the 'Anger Management program' and 'Less challenging job' scenarios, when the action in question **does not** have a direct effect on other inmates, discretion is left up to the individual inmate; there are no set rules for appropriate behaviour among the inmate population in these circumstances. In the 'Anger Management program' situation, 90% of inmates approve of the inmate taking a pro-social action by joining the Anger Management program. This action does not affect the welfare of other inmates and therefore does not come under the jurisdiction of the 'con code'. Similarly, only 28% of inmates approve of the inmate taking the less challenging job in the 'Less challenging job' scenario. When an inmate's choices do not affect other inmates, conventional goals and expectations become operative.

Staff definitions of proper inmate behaviour reveal a high degree of consensus in five of the six situations. Predictably, correctional staff are nearly unanimous in their approval of conventional, pro-social behaviour that contributes to the security of the institution and the safety of its inhabitants. The one situation where correctional staff differ the most is in the 'Knife fight' scenario where one inmate refuses to name the other inmate involved in the fight. This scenario deals with an instance of 'ratting'. The fact that 19% of correctional staff approve of the inmate's refusal to name the other inmate involved indicates that staff may be less clear on the status of informers than they are assumed to be. It appears that 19% of the correctional staff members at this institution, like the majority of inmates, have little respect for informers. This differentiation among correctional staff did not show up in the other 'ratting' situation,

the 'Riot' scenario, most likely because of the significance of the information relayed. Whereas a fight is 'merely' a rule infraction, the possibility of a riot puts the entire institution at risk, inmates and staff alike. Therefore, the severity of the circumstance (ie. riot) negates the stigma attached to ratting in a situation such as the 'fight' situation, which is less serious and 'only' involves inmates.

It is significant that the smallest discrepancy between private inmate approval and inmate perception of that approval is in the 'Riot' and the 'Knife fight' scenarios. Because of the important 'ratting' element in these scenarios, it is predictable that there will be less misperception occurring. Few inmates will 'rat' on a fellow inmate, and both the inmate group and staff know this. This is unlike the 'Anger Management program' and 'Less challenging job' scenarios which allow for personal discretion among inmates. The resulting pro-social responses in these two situations and inaccurate perceptions of such responses indicate some confusion among the inmate population in areas where the inmate code is not as influential. In contrast, the 'Riot' and 'Knife fight' scenarios are clearly examples of 'ratting' within the inmate population. The inmate code for behaviour addresses the issue in no uncertain terms: do not rat.

It appears that for some of the scenarios inmates subscribe to the code in their expectations for behaviour. It may be that they were answering the questions in terms of 'the code' (ie. what would most inmates do 'according to the code'). At any rate, the results indicate that pluralistic ignorance exists among the inmate and staff populations at Edmonton Institution, and it is more severe for staff members than for inmates.

CHAPTER 7: RESULTS FOR THE CORRECTIONAL OFFICER SCENARIOS

The previous two chapters focused on six scenarios that feature inmates as the central characters. We were interested in finding out about inmate and staff attitudes and perceptions regarding inmate behaviour. Now we will focus on the scenarios presented to the respondents which feature officers as the central characters. Three hypothetical situations in which correctional staff members are the central characters are used to study expectations regarding staff behaviour. The goal is to discover inmate and officer attitudes and perceptions regarding officer behaviour. The first scenario addresses the custodial nature of the correctional officer's role. The scenario reads:

> Inmate Anderson and Officer Sharp are having a heated argument. Anderson has refused to do the job he has been asked to do by the officer because it's his day off, and tells the officer to 'fuck-off'. Officer Sharp writes up a charge against Inmate Anderson for his abusive language.

This is the 'Charge for abusive language' scenario. The situation involves the everyday conflict between correctional staff who must maintain the security of the institution and fulfil their custodial role, and inmates, who often resist following the rules and regulations that make security possible.

Approval of Correctional Staff Member's Actions

How do correctional officers and inmates personally feel about the officer's decision to charge the inmate for his abusive language? Do they differ or agree?

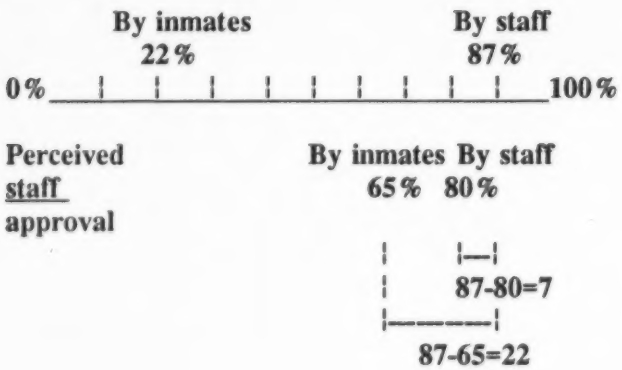
In the 'Charge for abusive language' scenario only 22% of inmates approve of the officer's decision to charge the inmate for his abusive language. However, 87% of correctional staff approve. There is obviously a rift in opinion between the two groups on this issue. A clear majority of inmates disapprove (only 22% approve) and a clear majority of COs approve (87%) of the officer's action to charge the inmate for abusive language. This leads us to ask how the two groups perceive staff feelings about the officer's decision to charge the inmate. Do staff and inmates accurately perceive CO approval for the officer's decision to charge the inmate for his abusive language?

Bias in the Perception of Correctional Staff Approval

How do inmates and correctional staff perceive correctional officer feelings about the officer's decision to charge the inmate for his abusive language?

Eighty percent of officers believe that their fellow officers would approve of the officer's decision to charge the inmate for his abusive language (actual approval 87%-80%=7% gap). Only 65% of inmates thought that officers would approve of the charge for abusive language (actual CO approval, 87%-65%=22% gap). Inmates experience greater misperception than do officers (22% vs. 7%), but it is interesting that inmates misperceive officer opinion in the pro-inmate direction. Inmates perceive fewer COs will approve of charging the inmate for abusive language than actually do. Figure 7.1 more clearly presents these differences in opinions and perceptions.

Figure 7.1: Orientation of Inmates and Staff to Officer's Decision to Charge Inmate for Abusive Language



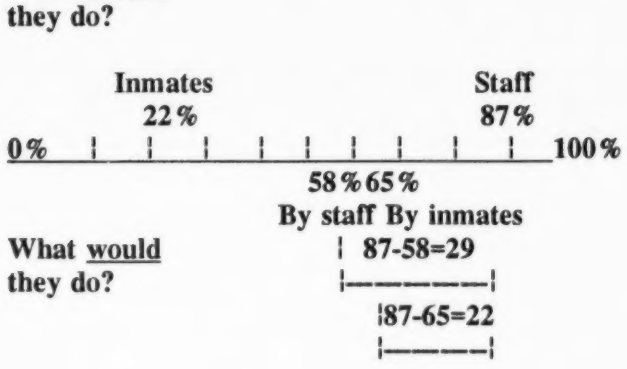
From the equations in the brackets we can see that inmates are more inaccurate in their perceptions. What is interesting is that inmates misperceive in the pro-inmate direction; they are inaccurate in that they see staff as acting more favourably to inmates than the staff see other staff. With the scenarios featuring inmates we found that staff are inaccurate in that they exaggerate their misperceptions of staff and inmates in a negative direction; here it is the inmates who misperceive, but they see staff in a more pro-inmate light. When we turn to inmate and CO prescriptions and expectations for officer behaviour however, we get a different impression.

Inmate and CO Prescriptions and Expectations Regarding Officer Actions

What do inmates and COs think the officer in the 'Charge for abusive language' scenario **should** do? What do inmates and COs think **most** officers **would** do in the 'Charge for abusive language' scenario?

Eighty-seven percent of officers think that the officer **should** charge the inmate for his abusive language. Significantly fewer officers think that **most** officers actually **would** charge the inmate; only 58% of officers think that most of their fellow officers would charge the inmate if faced with a similar situation. Essentially, officers see their fellow officers as being more pro-inmate than perhaps they **should** be. For inmates, only 22% think that the officer **should** charge the inmate for abusive language, but not surprisingly, they think that **most** officers (65%) **would** charge the inmate for abusive language. Figure 7.2 presents these relationships.

Figure 7.2: Inmate and CO Prescriptions and Expectations for Officer Behaviour



From Figure 7.2 we can see that inmates and staff have very different ideas about what the officers **should** do. Predictably, inmates choose the pro-inmate response and staff choose the pro-security response. Inmates more accurately estimate what most officers would do in this situation than do staff (22% difference vs. 29% difference for staff). This leads us to ask what inmates and staff think that inmates think about the officer's action. Do inmates think that other inmates would approve of the officer's decision to charge the inmate for abusive language? Do officers think that inmates would approve of the charge for abusive language?

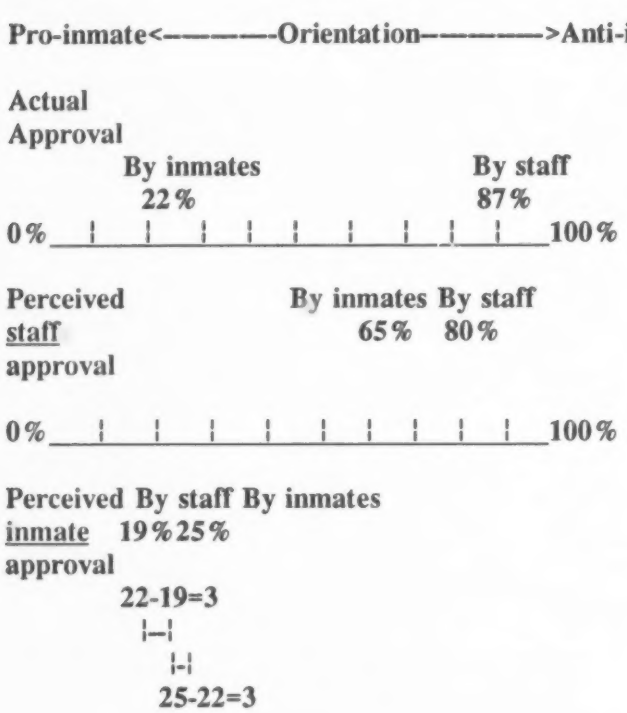
Bias in the Perception of Inmate Approval

How do inmates and correctional staff perceive inmate feelings about the officer's decision to charge the inmate for abusive language?

Twenty-five percent of inmates think that their fellow inmates would approve of the officer's decision to charge the inmate for his abusive language (25%-22%, actual inmate approval=3% gap). Inmates think other inmates would agree just a little more with the staff. Officers also are accurate in their perception of inmate approval

for the abusive language charge; they estimate that 19% of inmates would approve (actual inmate approval, 22%-19%=3% gap). Both groups do not seem to be affected to any great extent by pluralistic ignorance when it comes to estimating inmate approval of the officer's decision to charge the inmate for abusive language. Figure 7.3 presents these data.

Figure 7.3: Perceived Staff and Inmate Approval for Officer's Decision to Charge Inmate for Abusive Language



From Figure 7.3 we can see that the misperceptions of both inmates and staff are not extreme. In this case it appears that staff and inmates seem to have a fairly accurate perception of inmate feelings about the officer charging the inmate for abusive language. Still, inmates perceive that inmates are slightly more anti-inmate than staff.

The findings for the second and third scenarios are consistent with the results discussed above. The results for the second and third scenarios are presented in summary charts similar to the ones used in Chapter 6. The actual percentages of approval and perceptions of approval are presented in Appendix G.

The second scenario assesses expectations regarding staff loyalty to each other and the extent to which correctional staff would defend an inmate, if they think it is appropriate to do so. This is the scenario, referred to as the 'Defend' scenario:

> An officer and an inmate have had a dispute over whether the inmate's job has been done properly. Later, several of the officers are discussing the bad attitude of the inmate. One of the officers defends the inmate saying that, in that circumstance, he thought the inmate was right.

The third situation is a slight modification of one of Wheeler's 'correctional officer' scenarios and reads as follows,

> Officer Adams observes a fight between two inmates. The inmates apologize and say it was nothing. Officer Adams know that both inmates have clean conduct records, that they are due to go before the parole board soon, and that a write-up on their records might mean that they would not make parole. He decides to investigate, and if the fight was nothing serious, to forget about it.

In this situation, the officer faces the dilemma of rigidly adhering to formal rules or taking a more humanistic, permissive stance regarding the inmates in question. The tables presented below include the results for all three scenarios.

Table 7.1: Perceived Staff Approval and Degree and Direction of Pluralistic Ignorance

Scenario	Pluralistic Ignorance for Staff[1]	Pluralistic Ignorance for Inmates[2]	Direction of Pluralistic Ignorance[3]
Charge for Abusive Lang.	(87-80) 7%	(87-65) 22%	+15%
Defend Inmate	(56-34) 22%	(56-34) 22%	0%
No write-up	(63-51) 12%	(63-47) 16%	+4%

[1]This is the difference between staff approval and staff perception of staff approval.
[2]This is the difference between staff approval and inmate perception of staff approval.
[3]This indicates the magnitude and direction of pluralistic ignorance experienced between the groups. The - means that it is the correctional staff who exaggerate the differences more; the + means that it is the inmates who exaggerate to a greater extent.

Table 7.1 presents the percentages of pluralistic ignorance for inmates and staff. In the 'Charge for Abusive Language' scenario, there is a large gap between the two groups (15%). In this case inmates experience pluralistic ignorance to a greater degree; they are the more extreme of the two groups in their misperceptions. In the 'Defend inmate' scenario inmates and staff experience the same gap in estimating staff approval; for both groups the pluralistic ignorance is 22%. In the 'No write-up' scenario inmates experience slightly more pluralistic ignorance than the staff (4% more).

Table 7.2 presents the results for the scenarios used in Wheeler's study. Although the direction of pluralistic ignorance is similar to the present study (inmates are more extreme than staff), the amount of pluralistic ignorance is greater in Wheeler's study. The large difference might be a result of the different scenarios used by the two studies. However, even for Wheeler's 'Correctional officer' scenario and our 'No write-up' scenario, which are very similar, his respondents exhibit more pluralistic ignorance (25% vs. 4%).

Table 7.2: Wheeler's Results for Perceived Staff Approval and Direction of Pluralistic Ignorance

Scenario	Pluralistic Ignorance for Inmates	Pluralistic Ignorance for Staff	Direction of Pluralistic Ignorance
Psychologist	(33-13) 20%	(33-19) 14%	+6%
Correctional Officer[1]	(69-32) 37%	(69-57) 12%	+25%
Classification Committee	(74-41) 52%	(74-63) 11%	+22%

[1]Similar to the 'No write-up' scenario.

More similar to Wheeler's results however, are the gaps between prescriptions and expectations for the three scenarios in this study. Table 7.3 presents these gaps, which are larger than the those shown in Table 7.1.

Table 7.3: Gaps Between Prescriptions and Expectations for Inmates and Correctional Staff

Scenario	Inmates[1]	Staff[2]	Gap Between Prescriptions and Expectations
Charge for Abusive Language	(65-22) 22%	(87-58) 29%	-7%
Defend Inmate	(77-21) 56%	(71-21) 50%	+6%
No write-up	(65-36) 29%	(44-36) 8%	+21%

[1]This is the difference between what staff think staff should do and what inmates think staff would do.
[2]This is the difference between what staff think staff should do and what staff think staff would do.

In the 'Charge for abusive language' scenario it is the staff who are more inaccurate; in the other two scenarios inmates are the more inaccurate of the two groups. The degree of pluralistic ignorance is similar for the 'Charge for abusive language' scenario and the 'Defend inmate' scenario (7% and 6% respectively). However, in the 'No write-up' scenario the difference is much larger (21%). In the 'No write-up' scenario, inmates do not expect staff to act favourably toward inmates. While the above tables do indicate that misunderstandings are occurring between inmates and staff when it comes to estimating staff attitudes, there are fewer misperceptions in estimating inmate attitudes. Table 7.4 presents the gaps between groups in their estimations of inmate approval for the action taken in each scenario.

Table 7.4: Perceived Inmate Approval and Direction of Pluralistic Ignorance

Scenario	Pluralistic Ignorance for Staff[1]	Pluralistic Ignorance for Inmates[2]	Direction of Pluralistic Ignorance
Charge for Abusive Lang.	(22-19) 3%	(22-25) 3%	0
Defend Inmate	(82-77) 5%	(82-77) 5%	0
No write-up	(89-92) 3%	(89-84) 5%	+2%

[1]This is the difference between inmate approval and staff perception of inmate approval.
[2]This is the difference between inmate approval and inmate perception of inmate approval.

From Table 7.4 we can see that inmates and staff members have a good understanding about inmate feelings regarding staff behaviour. In the 'Charge for abusive language' scenario, the degree and direction of pluralistic ignorance is 0; staff and inmates both experience a 3% gap between actual inmate approval and their estimates of inmate feelings. In the 'Defend inmate' scenario, the degree and direction of pluralistic ignorance is also 0. Again, staff and inmates experience the same gap. For the 'No write-up' scenario, the degree and direction of pluralistic ignorance is 2%, with the inmates experiencing the larger gap. Essentially, inmates and staff have a clear idea about what inmates think about staff. Very little misperceiving is going on between the two groups when it comes to guessing what action inmates would like staff to take.

Responses to the scenarios

Predictably, inmates favor the more pro-inmate response in these scenarios. However, in general it seems that inmates perceive staff to be more anti-inmate than staff see other staff members. Inmates also expect staff to act in a more anti-inmate way than do staff expect other staff members to act. The exception to this tendency occurs in the 'Charge for abusive language' scenario. In this case, inmates see staff as more pro-inmate than staff see other staff. This might be because of the nature of the incident. In contrast to stabbings, staff assaults, and escape attempts, using abusive language does not seem that big a deal. It may be that inmates don't expect staff to take the use of abusive language as seriously as other incidents. Because inmates see the situation as not being very serious, they might also expect staff to be more lenient in this area. Thus, they see staff as more pro-inmate in this scenario. Similarly, officers estimate that fewer staff members actually would charge an inmate than they think should. Again, it seems that staff and inmates alike recognize that within prisons, inmates and staff curse - it's part of the 'culture'. It's not the worst thing that can occur in prison, so both groups expect staff to let it go for the most part.

In the 'Defend inmate' scenario the degree and direction of pluralistic ignorance between the two groups is 0. The gap between prescriptions and expectations is only +6%. The similarity in estimates between inmates and staff might be due to the ambiguity of the situation. No one really knows what the appropriate response for the respective groups is. Staff may experience the humanitarian vs. custodian dilemma; do they defend an inmate because they think he is in the right or do they place their loyalty and commitment to their fellow officers ahead of being fair to inmates? Inmates need to ask themselves if they really want a 'screw' to stick up for them, or if they really care either way[1]. The 'No write-up' scenario, although it similarly portrays an officer willing to defend inmates, is different in one important respect. This may be

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[1]Having an officer defend an inmate in front of two other officers really has no impact on the inmate's situation in terms of release or parole. If anything, having a guard defend him could be interpreted by eavesdropping inmates as an indication that the inmate is on particularly good terms with staff members (ie. is a rat).

an officer willing to defend inmates, is different in one important respect. This may be why the degree and direction of pluralistic ignorance is much larger for this scenario than for the others.

In the 'No write-up' scenario, the officer has to make a choice which has important and official implications for the inmates involved. If he decides to give the inmates a write-up, their chances for parole are significantly reduced. If he chooses not to give them a write-up, chances are they will get parole. The important characteristic of this situation is that the officer's decision is an official act that has the potential to be formally written and put on file. In contrast, in the 'Defend inmate' scenario, we are merely dealing with 'talk'; talk is not nearly as significant as an official document placed in an inmate's file. This might explain the increased pluralistic ignorance for this scenario. When inmates are at risk for any official action against them, the stereotypes and exaggerations of officers become more pronounced. As a result inmates expect staff members to act less pro-inmate. In fact, inmates expect more anti-inmate behaviour from staff than do staff.

In all three scenarios, staff and inmate perceptions of inmate approval are very similar (see Table 7.4). When it comes to staff behaviour, both staff and inmates have a very clear idea of how inmates would like staff members to behave. Obviously, inmates would prefer staff members to act in a pro-inmate manner.

CHAPTER 8: PLURALISTIC IGNORANCE AMONG INMATES

The results from the present study indicate that pluralistic ignorance does exist in the prison community studied. Large discrepancies occur between private attitudes and perceptions of these attitudes for both inmates and correctional staff members. Similar to previous research on pluralistic ignorance, the present study has found that public and private attitudes of inmates and correctional staff are very different.

Why do such pronounced differences between private opinions and group perceptions exist? Wheeler, in his analysis of inmate misperceptions, offers several explanations (1961). He refers to a social psychological process that creates bias in perception of the individual's own group. According to Wheeler, an inmate attempts to protect his self-esteem as judged by conventional standards (1961: 250). He judges himself by conventional standards because he still considers himself a member of the society that has temporarily rejected him. He may "deny that he is a 'typical' inmate by selectively perceiving other inmates' attitudes as more hostile to society than his own (Wheeler, 1961: 250). Our results for inmate prescriptions and expectations regarding inmate behaviour support this point. It was discovered that in general, although most inmates indicate that the inmate in question should choose the pro-social action, they think that most inmates would actually choose the anti-social action. In other words, I know what is the more appropriate choice in terms of conventional standards, but most inmates, who are very different from me, will choose the anti-social action.

The concept of pluralistic ignorance explains this process very well. Most inmates for most of the scenarios indicate that their personal attitudes are in fact **closer** to staff norms than they are perceived to be. Yet when asked to estimate what other inmates would think in the same situations, they perceive other inmates to be more anti-social than they themselves are. As Wheeler points out, it appears that inmates are attempting to maintain their own self-esteem and self-image by perceiving other inmates to be worse (ie. more anti-social) than they personally are, using mainstream society as a reference group.

Particularly interesting in the present study is the finding that correctional staff are more extreme and negative in their misperceptions than are inmates. Wheeler found the opposite to be true: inmates were the most negatively extreme of the two groups. The staff members in Wheeler's study made similar misperceptions, they were just less extreme than were the inmates. Wheeler explained staff misperceptions as partially a result of the constant contact that correctional staff have with inmates. According to Wheeler, correctional staff members are under pressure to be accepted by inmates as 'regular Joes'. As a result, they may come to view themselves as more responsive and understanding of inmate needs and concerns than they perceive other staff members to be. They see the staff group as more hostile toward inmates than they themselves personally are.

A second explanation that Wheeler offers is based on the concept of 'selective visibility' (1961: 250). As was mentioned in the first chapter, pluralistic ignorance is

produced by social processes that create the impression that certain individuals represent the views of the entire group. These individuals are 'selectively visible' for several reasons. In prisons, certain individuals are able to attain and occupy more visible positions than others. In the case of the inmate group, these are the leaders, the 'inmate elite'. In the case of correctional staff, they may be officers with seniority, with influence and power, or those who simply are louder and more gregarious than others. At any rate, the group members as a whole are susceptible to the opinions that are available to be perceived, whatever they may be (pro-social or anti-social) (Wheeler, 1961: 251).

> If the opinions of visible members are different from those of others in the organization, it is likely to be the opinions of the most visible members that serve as a basis for the perception of general group opinion (Wheeler, 1961: 251).

The results for this study imply that within the inmate group, it is the most anti-social inmates who achieve positions of influence. In all of the scenarios both inmates and staff perceive that inmates are more opposed to staff norms than they actually are. Someone must be creating this impression for inmates and staff alike. Likely it is the influential, anti-social inmates.

The finding that correctional staff members are the most negative and extreme in their misperceptions suggests that two processes might be occurring. First of all, influential, anti-social inmates may be exerting more influence over staff members than over other inmates. They may be particularly antagonistic or confrontational toward staff members, or they may be well-known for their disciplinary infractions, rule violations, or troublesome behaviour. At any rate, they appear to be 'ruining it for everyone' by creating an especially bad name for inmates in the eyes of the staff at this institution.

This explanation seems plausible considering the climate of the institution at the time of the study. Inmates were irrate about double bunking, the dissolution of the Inmate Committee, and the revocation of privileges. Certain inmates were very vocal and active in protesting these particular issues. This may have contributed to the more extreme, negative perceptions the correctional officers have of the inmate group. It is significant that four months after the study was completed, a correctional officer at the institution was repeatedly stabbed by an inmate. It would be interesting to see what this individual inmate's action did to the general perception that guards at the institution have of the inmate **group**.

The second explanation for the exaggerated misperceptions of the guards is that anti-inmate guards at the institution might be visible, vocal, and influential. They may be creating an impression of the guard group that is more negative and anti-inmate than the personal attitudes of individual guards warrant. Prison guards who have been in the organization or in corrections for a while may hold more anti-inmate attitudes, have had more opportunities to make their opinions known, and are more able to

influence group perceptions. Similarly, lifers in the inmate population are likely to be more influential among other inmates.

The inmate subculture: implications for the existence of pluralistic ignorance.

It may be that the inmate subculture at Edmonton Institution is based on false assumptions. The inmate subculture may have characteristics similar to that of the delinquent subculture referred to in Chapter One. It may be that inmates are hiding behind the tough facade called the 'inmate subculture'. They act tough on the outside, appearing to subscribe to the anti-social dictates of the subculture. The results from the present study indicate that although many of the inmate respondents pay public lip-service to the tenets of the subculture, they privately reveal more pro-social attitudes.

The existence of pluralistic ignorance implies that inmates may not be so stripped of individual autonomy and so deprived and frustrated that they completely abandon any pro-social thoughts and behaviours. They may superficially succumb to the influence of vocal leaders and 'the code' in order to survive while privately maintaining a belief in what they know is good and right. The inmate subculture may simply be a device that helps them cope - and survive. It may be that contravening the code publicly will result in severe sanctions and problems in general for everyday prison life. Psychologically it might also help the inmate to pay lipservice to the subculture. In dealing with the humiliations of prison life, the inmate subculture offers the inmate a means of rejecting his rejectors whether this rejection is sincere or merely a way of maintaining some sense of self-esteem and pride.

The inmate social system provides a form of informal control for the inmate group. Living among murderers and rapists is a scary thing. The inmate code may primarily serve to order relations among inmates. Being part of the group and surviving as a member means adhering to the laws of the land. If this means you don't speak to correctional officers then you don't speak to correctional officers, whether you agree with this tenet or not. This perspective contributes to an explanation regarding the evidence of pluralistic ignorance found within the inmate group in this study. Inmates know what the rules are, they know how they should behave according to the code, even if they privately disagree.

The inmate subculture as a facade.

Results from the present study provide support for the idea that the inmate subculture at Edmonton Institution is not a static, rigid, well-defined system. For certain areas of inmate life the code appears to have some bearing (ie. the scenarios that involve ratting), although even in these situations, misperceptions occurred: inmates perceived that inmates as a group are more anti-social than their private attitudes indicate. The evidence indicates that although there apparently exists some code for behaviour, private inmate attitudes do not accurately reflect these "code tenets". Rather, the code may serve primarily as a means of according legitimacy to the attitudes and behaviours of the vocal inmate leaders. The code tenets help enforce inmate misperceptions and in so doing help further the gap between inmates and guards. In other words, the code helps to maintain pluralistic ignorance: it helps to

make the misperceptions that are part of pluralistic ignorance seem legitimate.

Other research has indicated that the social climate of a particular correctional institution affects the behaviour of individual inmates. Essentially this implies that the social climate of an institution will affect the level of adherence to the inmate subculture that exists within that institution. Groups of inmates and staff in different units within the same institution or within different institutions will behave and react uniquely to various situations, thus creating different social climates. This, in turn, will evoke different behaviours. The implication is that there is not one static inmate subculture, even within one institution. Rather, as relations between people change, so do reactions change, and so do behaviours and attitudes change. As the 'subculture' changes, so does the level of pluralistic ignorance. For example, it was mentioned previously that the inmates at Edmonton Institution were particularly hostile and unhappy. The social climate of the institution was definitely tense. Does it not make sense that under such stressful circumstances inmates who are feeling especially victimized would unite to present a common front to staff and administrators? In this situation it seems likely that the inmates would band together, and the perception of an inmate population bound to the code would be more pronounced. The result is heightened perceptions of the anti-establishment nature of the inmate group, while private attitudes may change little. At any rate, the strength of the inmate subculture is subject to the pressures of the climate of the institution.

The inmate subculture is perceived as being anti-social. In fact it gains its strength from the idea that it provides a means for inmates to unite and act together to "reject their rejectors". Yet evidence from this study indicates that inmate private attitudes lie closer to staff norms than is perceived. In other words, individual inmates are not as anti-social as the image of the inmate subculture has led us to believe. Garabedian's study on an inmate-sponsored therapy group implies that the inmate subculture may not be as alienated and isolated from law-abiding society as is often thought (Garabedian, 1964). Rather, the inmates who started the group adopted legitimate means in an effort to achieve staff-sponsored goals. Similarly, at Edmonton Institution, a group of inmates are actively trying to start a discussion group. The group aims to invite members from the outside community to meet with them on a weekly basis. The group is to focus its attention on addressing issues regarding the negative publicity given inmates and their plight as well as solutions to some of the inadequacies of the correctional system. In any event, it is significant that these inmates have collected newspaper editorials, research conducted by professors from the University and other information regarding the issues in question. The point is that they are using legitimate means to address their concerns and to try to find legitimate solutions to them. Significantly these individuals are elected inmate leaders chosen to represent the inmate population. Since they were elected by the inmate population (members of the 'inmate subculture'), it may be that the inmate subculture is not as hostile to pro-social, legitimate activity as is assumed. It may be that inmates, like the delinquents studied by Sykes and Matza (1957) are not radically opposed to certain norms of law-abiding society at all.

The results for inmate prescriptions and expectations support the idea that

while individual inmates do not privately subscribe to an inmate subculture, they are aware of its tenets. Furthermore, they perceive 'other' inmates as subscribing to these tenets. While many inmates indicated the pro-social choice as the action which the inmate in each scenario should take, they indicated that most inmates would actually choose the more anti-social action. In other words, although I, as an individual inmate, know what is right, most inmates, who must subscribe to the code, would choose the anti-social action. It seems from the results discussed above that individual inmates see themselves as different from the majority of inmates. They have an idea of what most inmates (ie. the inmate group) think which is very different from what they personally think or know is right. Although we cannot assume that what an inmate knows is right is what he personally feels, the existence of pluralistic ignorance is evident. Because pluralistic ignorance appears to exist, the implication is that inmates perceive that a subculture exists: in fact, the inmate subculture may be an illusion propagated by a few members of the inmate elite.

Several researchers have conducted studies that cast doubt on the existence of a united, static inmate subculture espousing uniformly anti-social beliefs. From the picture of inmate society as a group of unattached, autonomous individuals forced into exploitative relationships, to the idea of an inmate population composed of an equal percentage of right guys and square johns, the message is that inmates are not as united as they may appear and certainly are not all anti-social, extreme, negative individuals who believe in contravening all of society's laws. Rather the picture that emerges is that of a group of scared, frustrated, humiliated individuals publicly succumbing to the influence of vocal, anti-social leader inmates, while privately rejecting such anti-social tenets. The findings from the present study indicate that this may be a more accurate picture of the inmate group. Results for the 'Anger Management program' scenario, 'Less Challenging job scenario' and remaining four scenarios clearly indicate that in instances where individual inmates need not worry about the threat to their safety (ie. in situations where an inmate's actions have no direct consequences for the inmate population in general) the majority of inmates will privately choose the pro-social action, while estimating that inmates as a group are more likely to favour the more anti-social action. Essentially, the results indicate that inmates are not really as bad as they think they are. Staff on the other hand, see inmates as much worse than inmates do. The next chapter focuses on the extreme and negative perceptions that staff have of inmates and of their own fellow officers.

CHAPTER 9: PLURALISTIC IGNORANCE AMONG CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS

Results from the present study reveal the existence of pluralistic ignorance among correctional staff as well as inmates at Edmonton Institution. Correctional officers predictably favour pro-social actions when their personal attitudes are measured. However when asked to estimate inmate approval for the action, they consistently perceive that inmates are more anti-social than private inmate attitudes indicate. More interesting is the tendency for correctional officers to perceive that inmates are more anti-social than inmates themselves estimate. Correctional officers also perceive that correctional staff members as a group would favour the more anti-inmate action. In other words, these staff members perceive that officers as a whole are more negative and anti-inmate than their private responses indicate. Furthermore, correctional staff members perceive correctional officers as a group to be more anti-inmate and extreme than inmates perceive them to be. At Edmonton Institution it appears that inmates more accurately estimate correctional officer opinions than do the officers. Evidently, pluralistic ignorance does exist among the correctional officer respondents at this institution.

From the results of the present study, it seems that the subculture custodians, those individuals who are loyal to the traditional, anti-inmate guard image, at Edmonton Institution may be particularly vocal and particularly effective in voicing their opinions and influencing the perceptions of other officers. Additionally, there may be several of these vocal officers working to produce the observed effect. Essentially,

> this 'pluralistic ignorance' serves to
> bolster a public custodial culture;
> fearing sanctions from other guards,
> officers give legitimacy to custodial
> goals while in the company of co-workers
> (Cullen, 1989).

Kauffman (1981) found that pluralistic ignorance among correctional officers causes officers as a group to overestimate the degree to which their colleagues support custodial, anti-inmate attitudes and behaviour. She too, found that although most guards are not particularly punitive in their orientation toward inmates, they perceive that officers as a group are punitive and anti-inmate (Kauffman, 1981).

As further evidence of the tendency for misperceptions to occur both within officer and inmate groups, Chang and Zastrow describe the results of a study they conducted which aimed to compare the perceptions of prison inmates and of security guards to themselves, to each other, and to significant other persons (1976). Chang and Zastrow found that in rating themselves compared to several other groups (ie. scientists, police officers, lawyers, prison security guards, etc.) inmates rated

themselves **as a group** the most negatively. However, in rating themselves personally (ie. "I am..."), inmates ranked themselves quite high, near the top of the list, in fact. These results support the present study which found that most inmates at Edmonton Institution chose the pro-social response when asked what the inmate should do, while estimating that most inmates would actually choose the anti-social response. Similar to Chang and Zastrow's findings, we found that for inmates, 'while I am pro-social and know what is proper, most inmates are anti-social'. Or as Chang and Zastrow state,

> each inmate may view himself as being a
> pro-social person who need not be confined,
> while he views other inmates as being
> hard-core criminals who deserve to be
> incarcerated (1976: 95).

Security officers in the study have a negative perception of inmates as well. They view inmates as being law-violating, unpredictable, sneaky, untrustworthy, dishonest, undependable and lazy (Chang and Zastrow, 1976: 96). Security officers, similar to the inmates in the study, evaluated themselves (the "I am" category) highly. However, unlike the inmates who ranked the inmate group lowest, prison guards evaluated the guard group highly as well. Similarly, Philliber refers to a study in which the "sample of guards rate the typical inmate below the ideal inmate, but rated the typical CO the same as the ideal CO" (Philliber, 1987: 22). The present study found that correctional officers at Edmonton Institution perceive the officer group in a negative light, even more negative than the inmates perceive the staff to be. In Philliber's terms, correctional staff members rated fellow staff members as being far less than ideal.

Essentially the findings from previous research and from the present study indicate that pluralistic ignorance does exist among correctional officers. Furthermore, the existence of pluralistic ignorance implies that a corrections officer subculture may not exist. According to Klofas and Toch, the small minority of subculture custodians attempt to portray an image of an officer subculture united and solidary in the face of institutional pressures (1982). In reference to the results of their study,

> If a CO "subculture" refers to shared pro-
> custodial norms, such a subculture is a myth.
> It is a myth given the level of professionalism
> in the sample and subsamples. We see differences
> in distributions of types in settings, but
> professional attitudes prevail in all prisons;
> at worst, the subculture is a composite of
> projected attitudes (Klofas and Toch, 1982: 251).

This is the process that appears to be occurring at Edmonton Institution. While private attitudes indicate professional values, perception of group opinion indicate that some

sort of 'subcultural custodial force' is operating. Essentially there is no subculture espousing pro-custodial, anti-inmate norms.

Several studies have been conducted that attempt to discover whether or not a guard subculture exists (Toch and Klofas, 1982; Lombardo, 1985; Kauffman, 1981). In addition to the existence of pluralistic ignorance which discredits the impression of a unified correctional officer subculture, Lombardo refers to additional reasons for the non-existence of a CO subculture (1985):

> COs are not recruited to the job for task-related purposes, they do not set their own goals, they are not interdependent, they do not have democratic organization or participation in decision-making, they work in a competitive atmosphere of distrust, and they have poor communication (Philliber, 1987: 26).

In addition to these points, Hepburn (1984) found that officer attitudes and perceptions of inmates are related to education and length of employment among guards. Furthermore, Klofas (1984) points out that opinions about inmates vary widely within the officer group. These findings suggest that variation, not unanimity exists within the CO group and that changes occur over time (Philliber, 1987: 26). Similarly, Brown et al. (1971) found that custodial officers and treatment staff have different attitudes toward inmates depending on the goals of the institution. They discovered that custodial staff at a custodially-oriented institution viewed inmates as significantly more antisocial than did treatment staff at the same institution. They also viewed inmates as significantly more active and aggressive than did their counterparts at the more rehabilitative institution. In other words, custodial staff at the rehabilitatively oriented institution held more positive views of inmates than did their counterparts at the custodially oriented institution.

Lombardo qualifies the argument that a correctional officer subculture does not exist by saying that under conditions of perceived threat from inmates or correctional administrators, officers may unite to form a solidary group. In response to such emergency situations (ie. possible riot), "assumed 'group' beliefs" (held by the subculture custodians of Klofas and Toch's study) may form the basis of a group identity with which each feels the other agree. This group identity manifests itself as the "subculture" (Lombardo, 1985: 86).

These findings discredit the existence of a solidary officer subculture. It appears rather, that when the goals of institutions differ, officer views of inmates similarly change, leaving little room for one unified, anti-inmate, pro-custodial officer subculture.

Why are the misperceptions of the staff at Edmonton Institution as negative and exaggerated as they appear to be?

As mentioned above, Brown et al. (1971) found support for the contention that custodial staff at custodial institutions have more negative perceptions of inmates. This seems logical since a custodial institution and especially a maximum security one, is concerned primarily with protecting society from convicted criminals. Thus, by the very nature of its purpose, we would expect Edmonton Institution and its correctional staff members to place a high priority on custody. Furthermore, we expect these staff members to hold more negative perceptions of inmates than for example, the staff at Bowden Institution, a correctional facility known for its focus on treatment and rehabilitation.

Research on corrections officers' attitudes toward inmates has focussed on the influence that characteristics of individual officers play and on the role that institutional goals and characteristics play in affecting officer attitudes (Smith and Hepburn, 1979; Hepburn, 1987; Jurik, 1985; Whitehead and Lindquist, 1989; McDermott and King, 1988). Several of these studies point to role conflict as contributing to increased punitiveness toward inmates (Hepburn and Albonetti, 1980; Poole and Regoli, 1980; Philliber, 1987). As Cheatwood points out, correctional officers are caught between two groups, the administrators and the inmates (1974). According to research, a high level of role conflict is associated with low work motivation, low support for treatment, and high support for custody ideology (Hepburn and Albonetti, 1980; Poole and Regoli, 1980). It may be that the subculture custodians are influencing the correctional group into perceiving that more role conflict exists than actually does. The result is a perception of high support for custody.

Similarly, the subculture custodians at Edmonton Institution may be experiencing role stress. This may be a result of "the ambiguous and often contradictory nature of the operational directives of superiors, coupled with the weakening of their position vis-a-vis the inmates" (Poole and Regoli, 1980: 217). To attempt to resolve this role stress, the subculture custodians increase their commitment to their custodial duties. In other words, to combat their dilemmas, they fall back into the traditional role of guard. Because of their influence within the officer group, they manage to convince the group that everyone is and should be focussing more on the negative, anti-social behaviour of inmates and attempting to control it. Thus the negative, exaggerated perceptions of inmate and staff behaviour held by the correctional officer group at Edmonton Institution.

Another factor that Hepburn found influential on officer attitudes and perceptions is the amount of power and control each group within the prison is perceived to have (1987). Level of control is associated with role conflict, job satisfaction, and alienation. Hepburn found that "prison guards feel besieged by both prisoners and administrators" (1987: 50). They feel that inmates have too many rights, so that guards cannot properly enforce institutional rules, and they feel they don't receive the necessary recognition, support, and cooperation from administrators. In essence, guards in Hepburns' study believed they had significantly less actual control than prisoners and administrators (1987: 53). It may be that influential leaders among

correctional officers at Edmonton Institution similarly believe that correctional officers do not have enough control. Their cynicism and dissatisfaction in this respect may be affecting the group as a whole and contributing to their misperceptions.

Alienation, role conflict, and role stress among the subcultural custodians especially may exacerbate the tendencies already occurring because of pluralistic ignorance. Although individual officers are pro-inmate, they may overestimate to an even greater extent the pro-custodial tendencies of the guard group (Cullen, 1989). Driven to louder and more frequent complaints by the role conflict and stress they feel, the subculture custodians may actually be driving the group as a whole to more negative, anti-inmate, pro-custodial perceptions.

Prison guards do not live in jail, they just work there. They are members of the larger, free society from which they come and to which they return when their shift is over. It is likely that the correctional officers at Edmonton Institution are expressing, in their perceptions of fellow officers and inmates, the opinions held by members of the general public. Society currently holds very negative attitudes toward prisons, the inmates confined within them and by association, the people who work there. It may be that in estimating the opinions of correctional officers and inmates, the officers at Edmonton Institution are merely reflecting the attitudes they have been hearing and reading about in their lives outside of work. What can be done to reduce these misperceptions among inmates and especially staff at Edmonton Institution? The next chapter offers some potential solutions to the problem of pluralistic ignorance at Edmonton Institution.

CHAPTER 10: WHAT CAN BE DONE?

The concept of pluralistic ignorance implies that conflicts arising between inmates and between inmates and staff can potentially be reduced. The fact that correctional staff members appear to be more negatively affected by the existence of pluralistic ignorance suggests that it may be the correctional staff at Edmonton Institution who deserve our attention and who need to change the most.

Because pluralistic ignorance supports the contention that inmate and correctional officer subcultures are illusory or superficial, this should make the task of reducing pluralistic ignorance among both groups somewhat less intimidating. Knowing that the majority of inmates are privately less anti-social and that the majority of correctional officers are privately pro-inmate and professional makes the task of reducing misperceptions less formidable than if the opposite were true.

Inmates

Reducing pluralistic ignorance among inmates at Edmonton Institution may mean attempting to reduce the power of hostile inmate leaders. Grusky claims that all informal leaders derive their influence from their ability to solve problems (1959). He also found that the orientation of inmate leaders varies with the type of institution, treatment or custodial. Changing the orientation of Edmonton Institution from a custodial to a treatment based institution is not an option for obvious reasons. However, if institutional policy could adapt to meet inmate needs that currently are not being met, the inmates may not need to turn to informal leaders for support. In other words, by reformulating some policies to meet inmate needs and desires, staff and administrators at the institution could reduce the chances of inmate leaders voicing their opinions about the lack of cooperation from the administration. For example, by giving the inmates an Inmate Committee, inmate leaders would no longer be able to complain about the administration for not letting them have a democratic body to represent their views. The vocal, hostile leaders would have one less reason to rally support, so their anti-staff, anti-social attitudes might be reduced in frequency and magnitude.

By establishing positive relations between staff members and inmates, it seems likely that communication and understanding would increase while pluralistic ignorance could be reduced. At Grusky's experimental prison camp it was possible to establish cooperation between inmates and staff (Grusky, 1959: 67). Although Edmonton Institution is not a treatment oriented institution, nor an experimental camp, it may be useful and beneficial to adopt some of the steps used in Grusky's camp in an effort to reduce pluralistic ignorance. Rather than stressing custodial, confrontational, suspicious attitudes, perhaps staff should be encouraged to adopt more positive, helpful, cooperative attitudes toward inmates. Training sessions and inservices could be given to staff to present these ideas in a group setting. These new approaches might be established as administrative policy so that the subculture custodians among the correctional officers have less influence and power among their colleagues.

According to research conducted by Berk, the informal inmate organization

attempts to fill the gaps in services provided by the formal organization (1966). In attempting to reduce pluralistic ignorance and the appeal of anti-social inmate leaders, it may be worthwhile for the prison administration in a custodial institution such as Edmonton Institution to try to fill some of the gaps in services that are particularly aggravating to the inmate population (ie. Inmate Committee, double-bunking, poor food, bureaucratic hassles). Again, the goal should be to reduce every opportunity for hostile inmate leaders to complain, and in so doing influence inmate perceptions. Berk found that in treatment oriented institutions, leadership among inmates is based on consensus and cooperation and the number of inmates who occupy leadership positions is greater than in custodial institutions (1966). More leaders means more accurate representation of the beliefs and attitudes of the inmate population; there is less opportunity for a few vocal, hostile inmates to misrepresent and influence group opinions. If Edmonton Institution could take on some of the traits of a treatment oriented institution while still retaining its primarily custodial philosophy, pluralistic ignorance among and between inmates and staff might be reduced to some extent, resulting in increased communication, increased efficiency, and possibly decreased conflict and violence.

In addition to these suggestions however, it might also prove beneficial to inform inmates of the existence of pluralistic ignorance, the misperceptions that form its basis, and the problems that result from these misunderstandings. By informing them of the processes involved, they will be more aware of it themselves and may be more careful in drawing conclusions and making assumptions about other inmates and correctional officers. At any rate, it is important to also effect changes in the way institutions are run in order to reduce pluralistic ignorance.

Correctional Staff

Since "there is little reason to believe that a guard subculture capable of influencing the attitudes and behaviour of individual guards exists under normal prison conditions" (Lombardo, 1985: 87), reducing pluralistic ignorance among correctional officers is a realistic task. Private officer attitudes indicate they are professional, humanistic, relatively pro-inmate individuals who are sympathetic to the inmate situation. Enacting official policy that lends administrative support to the professional attitudes of lonely braves will be easy to enforce: the majority of COs are privately professional anyway. Giving their attitudes official support will give them strength and will show them that the majority of their colleagues do feel the same way they do. Furthermore it will give them more confidence in expressing themselves in the face of the subculture custodians, knowing that official institutional policy supports them (Cullen, 1989: 40).

Empowering correctional officers is another way to reduce pluralistic ignorance among the group. By transferring to guards some of the control exercised by administrators, officers as a group would have more influence over their work environment, and the subculture custodians would have one less issue to use as a basis for influencing others. Hepburn found support for the idea that the greater the perceived disparity in actual influence between guards and administrators, the greater

will be the alienation experienced by guards (1987: 61). By giving guards more control, alienation will decrease, communication will increase, and pluralistic ignorance may decrease. Essentially, "guards' attitudes toward their work will be improved through collaborative or participative management" (Hepburn, 1987: 62; Philliber, 1987: 28). It may be that the correctional staff at Edmonton Institution are particularly dissatisfied with their work and are feeling the pressures of role stress and alienation. By granting the officer group an active and formal role in making policy and procedure decisions that affect their work environment, administrators may help to improve the condition of the officers. And, since research shows that increased role stress is related to increased punitiveness and custodial oriented attitudes, it follows that reducing role stress will result in a reduction in custodial, anti-inmate attitudes and perceptions among officers.

Duffee's research efforts in one correctional institution resulted in some positive changes among correctional officers (1974). By participating in a weekly discussion group with Duffee, the ideological beliefs of six correctional officers gradually changed. This was accomplished partly by instilling in them the belief that they were the effectors of change and were not merely changees. In other words, they were not mere receptacles of new information, rather, they were playing an influential role in the production of information and its dissemination. The correctional officers identified several crucial, short-range problems and took organized steps to solve them. Their changes tended to be more "inmate-friendly" and less in keeping with traditional prison officer subcultural norms.

Porporino (1986) also points to established roles and norms within correctional institutions as contributing to prison violence. Many correctional officers who have crisis relevant skills that inmates could benefit from, are restricted from employing them because of subcultural ideologies as well as staff procedures. He calls for matching between certain inmate groups (ie. high-risk violent groups) and staff members with compatible skills. In essence, he is calling for an alternative to the system we now employ; we need to develop a "collaborative human service delivery system within prisons" (Porporino, 1986: 232).

Toch and Klofas (1984) argue that in an effort to reduce pluralistic ignorance in prison we must mobilize social forces of the same kind that shape pluralistic ignorance to neutralize its impact (Toch, 1984: 155). The logic behind this is that group process must counteract group process. They point to several steps that can be taken in an attempt to accomplish this task. For example, the prime change targets must be the 'lonely braves', those individuals who see themselves as professional, in that they respect the dignity of inmates, inmate rights, and the potential for their growth and development" (Correctional Services Canada, 1991: 7), but see other staff members as non-professional. They need to see that the majority of officers are in fact professional in orientation, like themselves. In using surveys to measure the extent of pluralistic ignorance, it is important to provide feedback from the surveys to the respondents, but to do so in the context of group experiences, to show that the results are, in fact, realistic. Furthermore, the content of the group sessions must focus on the sources of the false impressions leading to pluralistic ignorance, and must isolate the

effects of pluralistic ignorance on the respondents' own behaviour (Toch, 1984: 155). Another point made is that group members must commit themselves to take 'liberated actions', having been enlightened as to the effects of pluralistic ignorance on their lives. This could be done at Edmonton Institution by presenting the results of the present study in a group context, for example, with groups of interested staff members, administrators and inmates present.

The points mentioned above are only a few of those suggested by Toch and Klofas as a way of reducing pluralistic ignorance. From the studies mentioned, it seems likely that steps can be taken in an effort to reduce the degree of pluralistic ignorance at Edmonton Institution. By dispelling the misconceptions and assumptions characteristic of the guard subculture vs. inmate subculture illusion, perhaps prison violence can be reduced, making Edmonton Institution and other correctional institutions more effective and our society as a whole safer and healthier.

By informing correctional officers and inmates of the processes at work between and among guards and inmates, and making them aware of pluralistic ignorance, we can begin to reduce the misperceptions that are occurring. At Edmonton Institution in particular, however, after this first step, it appears that our focus should be primarily on the correctional staff. The fact that they perceive inmates **and** correctional staff in a more negative, inaccurate and exaggerated light than do the inmates indicates that something must be causing such inaccuracies. It may be that COs here are particularly alienated and feel powerless in the face of increasing prisoner rights and administrative controls. It may be that they are merely reflecting the perceptions they believe the general public holds toward inmates and staff at a maximum security facility. Whatever the reason, several options are available to increase awareness of and accuracy of perceptions of attitudes for these correctional officers.

Edmonton Institution, during the time of the study, initiated a project on prison violence. Six sub-committees composed of correctional officers, managers, caseworkers, and inmates were formed. Each sub-committee was to hold regular meetings to discuss certain issues and come up with recommendations to effectively deal with factors leading to violence at the institution. The project had great potential for dealing with the types of issues mentioned above. Although unintentional, the project would have also coincided very well with the second and third stages of the present study. But for whatever reason, the Edmonton Institution project on prison violence ended shortly after it began. Perhaps the findings from this study, combined with recent incidents of violence at the institution, will provide proof that something should be done at Edmonton Institution - soon.

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APPENDIX A
UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA RESEARCH PROJECT

WHO: My name is Jana Grekul. I am a Graduate student in Sociology at the University of Alberta, working on my Masters degree.

WHAT: As part of my thesis, I am conducting a study on how communication, and attitudes people have toward conflict situations in prison, affect behaviour.

HOW: Basically, I am asking you for your help, time, and advice. I would appreciate your assistance with this project, and am asking you to consider participating. My goal is not to disrupt your schedules and work while I am conducting this study. Here's what's involved:

1. I need at least 5-10 inmate volunteers and 5-10 correctional staff volunteers to discuss some basic issues with me and to advise me as I make up a questionnaire.
2. I need as many people as possible, staff and inmates, to fill out the questionnaire. It should take about 10-15 minutes to fill out, and is anonymous-no one, including me, will know which questionnaire is yours.
3. I would like to discuss the results from the questionnaire with you once I've analyzed them.

WHEN: I hope to begin interviewing volunteers some time in early January. I would like to distribute the questionnaires to everyone at the end of January.

WHY: I think the potential for conflict is a reality for each of you within the prison setting. It is my hope that through your input and contributions to my study, some insight will result. Methods or techniques of communication can then be developed to resolve issues before the possibility of conflict occurs.

THANK-YOU! I look forward to meeting with you and hope you will consider participating in the study in whatever way you can. I promise to minimize the time and effort required on your part. I have a lot to learn here, and hope you'll consider helping me. If you are interested in helping me with my questionnaire: staff members, please advise me by memo to the Staff Training Coordinator; inmates, please inform your unit reps. Once I know you're interested, I will contact you. Thanks again!

APPENDIX B

Attitudes, Communication, and Prison Conflicts

To All Correctional Staff:

I would like to enlist your help in a study I am doing. I am a Masters student in Sociology at the University of Alberta and have obtained permission to complete a research project at the Edmonton Institution.

The study has to do with attitudes and communication among inmates and correctional staff, and the effects these factors have on the potential for conflict. There are several stages to the project, all of which involve correctional staff participation.

I know that many demands are placed on you. To accommodate your situations, I will try to minimize the time and energy required on your part for participation in the study. Here is what the study requires:

1. I will need 5-8 correctional staff members to advise me on certain issues that will be addressed in a questionnaire. This stage will involve one-on-one discussions (approximately 2 such sessions will suffice) which can occur during your shifts or at your convenience.

2. The second stage will involve filling out the questionnaire. It will be included in your January paycheque, and should only take 10-15 minutes to complete. All correctional staff will receive this questionnaire.

3. The results of the questionnaire will be discussed with you once I've analyzed them.

Thank-you for your anticipated cooperation. I look forward to meeting with you. I am very excited about this study because of the potential I believe it has for the reduction of conflicts in prisons. It is my hope that you, too, will find it interesting, since the potential for conflict plays such an important role in your daily lives. If you would like to volunteer for the first stage of the study (advising me on the creation of my questionnaire), please advise me by memo to the Staff Training Coordinator. Thanks!

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

This interview is completely voluntary. If there are any questions you do not want to answer, you do not have to answer them. If for any reason you decide you no longer want to participate in the interview, you are not compelled to do so. This interview is anonymous. I will not be recording your names anywhere.

This section is optional.

1. What is your age?

2. How long have you served in this institution? (worked here)

3. How much time have you served in total? (worked in corrections)

This section deals with communication.

1. DO YOU THINK THAT COMMUNICATION IN CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTIONS IS AN IMPORTANT ISSUE? WHY OR WHY NOT?

2. HOW WELL DO YOU THINK INMATES COMMUNICATE WITH EACH OTHER?

Not well — Very well at all
1 — 10
Why did you answer this way?

3. HOW WELL DO YOU THINK INMATES AND CORRECTIONAL STAFF COMMUNICATE? 1-10 WHY? HOW WELL ARE CORRECTIONAL STAFF AND ADMINISTRATORS ABLE TO COMMUNICATE? WHY? HOW WELL ARE INMATES AND ADMINISTRATORS ABLE TO COMMUNICATE? 1-10
Why did you answer the way you did?

This next section deals with relations between inmates and between inmates and correctional staff.

1. HOW WELL DO YOU THINK INMATES AND CORRECTIONAL STAFF GET ALONG IN GENERAL? 1-10 WHY?

2. HOW WELL DO YOU THINK INMATES GET ALONG WITH EACH OTHER IN GENERAL? 1-10 WHY?

3. WOULD YOU SAY CONFLICT OR VIOLENCE HERE IS HIGH, LOW OR AVERAGE COMPARED TO OTHER INSTITUTIONS?

4. WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE SOME FACTORS LEADING TO CONFLICT OR VIOLENCE IN PRISONS?

5. COULD YOU NAME 3 MAJOR ISSUES THAT YOU THINK COULD RESULT IN MISUNDERSTANDINGS OR CONFLICT OCCURRING BETWEEN INMATES?

6. COULD YOU DESCRIBE 3 MAJOR ISSUES THAT YOU THINK COULD RESULT IN CONFLICT OCCURRING BETWEEN CORRECTIONAL STAFF AND INMATES?

7. I NEED TO CREATE HYPOTHETICAL REALISTIC SITUATIONS WHERE PEOPLE MIGHT DISAGREE. CAN YOU CREATE SUCH A SCENARIO FOR ME THAT WOULD BE REALISTIC?
(This can be from personal experience)

INFORMING ON ANOTHER INMATE:
BEING LOYAL TO ANOTHER INMATE:
BREAKING A RULE:
CLASSIFICATION\THERAPY:
OTHER:

8. IF YOU COULD CHANGE ANYTHING ABOUT LIFE IN PRISON\WORKING IN PRISON, WHAT WOULD IT BE? WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO PRISON ADMINISTRATORS ABOUT RUNNING A PRISON?

This section deals with advice I need regarding my questionnaire.

1. DO YOU THINK THAT IF I ASKED FOR AGE, LENGTH OF SENTENCE, TIME SERVED (NUMBER OF YEARS SPENT WORKING IN CORRECTIONS)...IT WOULD REDUCE THE CHANCES OF INMATES (STAFF) ANSWERING THE QUESTIONNAIRE?

2. WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO MEET WITH ME AGAIN TO FILL OUT A SAMPLE QUESTIONNAIRE AND TELL ME HOW YOU THINK IT COULD BE IMPROVED?

3. WHAT DO YOU THINK WOULD BE THE BEST WAY TO ADMINISTER THE QUESTIONNAIRE SO THAT AS MANY PEOPLE AS POSSIBLE MIGHT FILL IT OUT? (for example, should I go cell to cell by myself, should I get a correctional officer to help me hand them out-but not to pick them up, should I get inmates (unit reps) to help me hand them out cell to cell...; How should they be returned? Should I

go cell to cell with a big box for people to throw them into, leave box in unit office, should they be mailed back...?)

4. What were you convicted for?

5. WOULD YOU MIND IF I QUOTED WHAT YOU'VE SAID IN THIS INTERVIEW, IN MY WORK?

Do you have any questions or comments you would like to add?

THANK-YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TIME AND ADVICE! I REALLY APPRECIATE IT AND LOOK FORWARD TO MEETING WITH YOU AGAIN.

APPENDIX D

To: All Inmates at Edmonton Institution

From: Jana Grekul

Re: University Research Project on Attitudes and Communication

Hi! I am hoping that most of you are familiar with the study I am doing here. Posters have been put up around the Institution describing the project. Part of the Project involves giving you all a questionnaire to fill out.

This brief note is to let you know that my assistant and I will be coming around during the morning (11:15) and afternoon (4:15) lock-ups on Monday, March 14 and Tuesday, March 15 to distribute the questionnaires to each of you individually.

Because we will be coming to you during the lock-ups, it is likely we will not be able to speak to you directly, or to hand the questionnaire to you directly. Rather, we will probably have to pass you the questionnaire under the door.
At the end of the lock-up period, we will be collecting the questionnaires from you. It should only take 15 minutes to half an hour to complete.

I would like to ensure you that **only** my assistant and myself will handle the questionnaires. (My assistant is Colleen Everitt. Some of you may know her from her involvement with the Lifer's Group.) The questionnaires are completely anonymous - your name or your handwriting does not appear anywhere on the questionnaire and there are no numbers or anything else that can track your questionnaire to you.

I understand your concern that staff members or the administration will see the questionnaires. Please let me assure you that **NO ONE** will see or touch **ANY** of the questionnaires. Part of the ethical standards of the University for this study is that your anonymity is guaranteed.

I would like to thank-you all ahead of time for participating in the study by filling out the questionnaire. I will be presenting the results from the questionnaires to you sometime in the future!
Thanks again!!!
Sincerely,
Jana Grekul

APPENDIX E

Please read the following hypothetical situations and answer the questions by putting a circle around your choice.

---

1. *Inmates Smith and Brown are planning an escape. They need a third person to help them by hiding a pair of wirecutters. They ask Inmate Jones who is also in their Unit. Inmate Jones refuses to help, saying he wants nothing to do with their plan because he is scared of getting caught.*

---

a. How do you personally feel about Inmate Jones' decision?

Strongly approve 1
Approve 2
Disapprove 3
Strongly disapprove 4

b. How many *inmates* do you think would approve of his action?

Almost all would approve 1
About three-fourths would approve 2
About half would approve 3
About one fourth would approve 4
Almost none would approve 5

c. How many *staff members* do you think would approve of Jones' action?

Almost all would approve 1
About three-fourths would approve 2
About half would approve 3
About one fourth would approve 4
Almost none would approve 5

d. What should Jones have done?

He should have refused to help (*he did the right thing*) 1
He should have helped the other two inmates by hiding the wirecutters for them, even though he wouldn't be attempting the escape with them 2

e. What would most inmates do?

Most inmates would refuse to help, just like Jones did 1
Most inmates would help their fellow inmates to escape if they were asked 2

2.Inmate Johnson received some drugs during one of his visits. He was able to get the drugs past the correctional officers, but he thinks they are now suspicious of him. He asks Inmate Schwartz to keep the drugs for him until things calm down. Inmate Schwartz agrees to keep the drugs.

a. How do you personally feel about Schwartz's decision to keep the drugs for awhile?

Strongly approve 1
Approve 2
Disapprove 3
Strongly disapprove 4

b. How many *inmates* do you think would approve of the Schwartz's action?

Almost all would approve 1
About three-fourths would approve 2
About half would approve 3
About one fourth would approve 4
Almost none would approve 5

c. How many *staff members* do you think would approve of Schwartz's action?

Almost all would approve 1
About three-fourths would approve 2
About half would approve 3
About one fourth would approve 4
Almost none would approve 5

d. What should Schwartz have done?

He should have kept the drugs (*he did the right thing*) 1

He should have refused to keep the drugs for Johnson 2

e. What would most inmates do?

Most inmates would hide the drugs for a fellow inmate 1

Most inmates would refuse to hide the drugs for another inmate 2

3. *Several influential inmates are talking about and spreading the word around about having a riot. Inmate Wagner is afraid of what is happening and doesn't like the idea of a riot occurring. He goes to a correctional officer and tells him about what's been going on.*

a. How do you personally feel about Wagner's decision?

Strongly approve 1
Approve 2
Disapprove 3
Strongly disapprove 4

b. How many *inmates* do you think would approve of Wagner's action?

Almost all would approve 1
About three-fourths would approve 2
About half would approve 3
About one fourth would approve 4
Almost none would approve 5

c. How many *staff members* do you think would approve of his action?

Almost all would approve 1
About three-fourths would approve 2
About half would approve 3
About one fourth would approve 4
Almost none would approve 5

d. What should Wagner have done?

Wagner should have informed the correctional officer about the riot plans (*he did the right thing*) 1

Wagner should have kept the information a secret 2

e. What would most inmates do?

Most inmates would tell an officer about the riot plans, just like Wagner did 1

Most inmates would keep the information secret 2

4. An Anger Management Program is being offered to interested inmates. Inmate Park thinks he could benefit from such a program, even though it's not part of his case plan, so he asks a member of the staff if he can get into the program.

a. How do you personally feel about Park's decision to join the Anger Management Program?

Strongly approve 1
Approve 2
Disapprove 3
Strongly disapprove 4

b. How many *inmates* do you think would approve of Park's action?

Almost all would approve 1
About three-fourths would approve 2
About half would approve 3
About one fourth would approve 4
Almost none would approve 5

c. How many *staff members* do you think would approve of Park's action?

Almost all would approve 1
About three-fourths would approve 2
About half would approve 3
About one fourth would approve 4
Almost none would approve 5

d. What should Park have done?

He should ask about joining the program if he thinks it will benefit him (*he did the right thing*) 1

He should not admit to needing help and shouldn't join the program . . 2

e. What would most inmates do?

Most inmates would join the program if it meant they could help themselves 1

Most inmates would not join a program like the Anger Management program, even if they think it could help them 2

5. Inmate Smith gets cut in a knife fight with another inmate. Smith is called before a disciplinary committee. The committee asks him to tell them who he was fighting with. He refuses to name the other inmate.

a. How do you personally feel about inmate Smith's action?

Strongly approve 1
Approve 2
Disapprove 3
Strongly disapprove 4

b. How many *inmates* do you think would approve of inmate Smith's action?

Almost all would approve 1
About three-fourths would approve 2
About half would approve 3
About one fourth would approve 4
Almost none would approve 5

c. How many *staff members* do you think would approve of inmate Smith's action?

Almost all would approve 1
About three-fourths would approve 2
About half would approve 3
About one fourth would approve 4
Almost none would approve 5

d. What should inmate Smith have done?

He should do exactly what he did - refuse to name the other inmate involved 1

He should be cooperative with the committee and name the other inmate 2

e. What would most inmates do?

Most inmates would do what Smith did and refuse to name the other inmate involved 1

Most inmates would be cooperative and name the other inmate involved 2

6. Inmate Scott has put in a request for a job change. He is offered 2 choices for a new job. One position would mean he would have less work to do than he has now. The job would be boring, but it would mean he could work with some of his friends. The other job he is offered is more challenging and it would help prepare him for a good job once he is released from prison. He takes the less challenging job.

a. How do you personally feel about Inmate Scott's decision to take the less challenging job?

Strongly approve 1
Approve 2
Disapprove 3
Strongly disapprove 4

b. How many *inmates* do you think would approve of Scott's action?

Almost all would approve 1
About three-fourths would approve 2
About half would approve 3
About one-fourth would approve 4
Almost none would approve 5

c. How many *staff members* do you think would approve of Scott's action?

Almost all would approve 1
About three-fourths would approve 2
About half would approve 3
About one-fourth would approve 4
Almost none would approve 5

d. What should Scott have done?

He should have picked the easier job, just as he did 1

He should have picked the more challenging job, since it would improve his chances of getting a good job on the outside 2

e. What would most inmates do?

Most inmates would do the same thing Scott did and choose the easier job 1

Most inmates would choose the more challenging job 2

7. Inmate Anderson and Officer Sharp are having a heated argument. Anderson has refused to do the job he has been asked to do by the Officer because it's his day off, and tells the officer to "fuck-off". Officer Sharp writes up a charge against Inmate Anderson for his abusive language.

---

a. How do you personally feel about the *correctional officer's* decision to charge Anderson for abusive language?

Strongly approve 1
Approve 2
Disapprove 3
Strongly disapprove 4

b. How many *inmates* do you think would approve of the action?

Almost all would approve 1
About three-fourths would approve 2
About half would approve 3
About one fourth would approve 4
Almost none would approve 5

c. How many *staff members* do you think would approve of the action?

Almost all would approve 1
About three-fourths would approve 2
About half would approve 3
About one fourth would approve 4
Almost none would approve 5

d. What should the officer have done?

The officer should have charged the inmate for his abusive language (*he did the right thing*) 1

The officer should have ignored what the inmate said since they were arguing anyway 2

e. What would most officers do?

Most officers would charge the inmate as did Officer Sharp 1

Most officers would ignore what the inmate said during the argument . 2

8. An officer and an inmate have had a dispute over whether the inmate's job has been done properly. Later, several of the officers are discussing the bad attitude of the inmate. One of the officers defends the inmate saying that, in that circumstance, he thought the inmate was right.

a. How do you personally feel about the *correctional officer's* decision?

Strongly approve 1
Approve 2
Disapprove 3
Strongly disapprove 4

b. How many *inmates* do you think would approve of this officer's action?

Almost all would approve 1
About three-fourths would approve 2
About half would approve 3
About one fourth would approve 4
Almost none would approve 5

c. How many *staff members* do you think would approve of the officer's action?

Almost all would approve 1
About three-fourths would approve 2
About half would approve 3
About one fourth would approve 4
Almost none would approve 5

d. What should the officer have done?

He should have defended the inmate if he felt the inmate was in the right (*he did the right thing*) 1

He should not have defended the inmate in front of the other officers because they might think badly of him 2

e. What would most officers have done?

Most officers would have defended the inmate just as this officer did . 1

Most officers would not have defended an inmate in front of other officers, even if they did think the inmate was right 2

9. *Officer Adams observes a fight between two inmates. The inmates apologize and say it was nothing. Officer Adams knows that both inmates have clean conduct records, that they are due to go before the parole board soon, and that a write-up on their records might mean that they would not make parole. He decides to investigate, and if the fight was nothing serious, to forget about it.*

a. How do you personally feel about the *correctional staff member's* action?

Strongly approve 1
Approve 2
Disapprove 3
Strongly disapprove 4

b. How many *inmates* do you think would approve of the officer's action?

Almost all would approve 1
About three-fourths would approve 2
About half would approve 3
About one fourth would approve 4
Almost none would approve 5

c. How many *staff members* do you think would approve of the officer's action?

Almost all would approve 1
About three-fourths would approve 2
About half would approve 3
About one fourth would approve 4
Almost none would approve 5

d. What should the officer have done?

He should have done exactly what he did - investigate, and if the fight was nothing serious, forget about it 1

He should have given the inmates a write-up, and let them take the consequences 2

e. What would most officers do?

Most officers would do what this officer did - investigate, and if the fight was nothing serious, forget about it 1

Most officers would have given the inmates a write-up, and let them take the consequences 2

For each of the following questions, please respond by circling your response on the 7-point scale. If you think that communication is not good, circle '1'. If you think that communication is 'very good', circle '7'. If you are not sure, or feel that communication is somewhere in between, circle the appropriate number from '2' to '6'.

10. a. How good is communication **between** inmates?

Not good						Very good
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

b. How good is communication between **inmates and correctional staff**?

Not good						Very good
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

c. How good is communication **between correctional staff**?

Not good						Very good
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

11. a. How well do you think inmates get along **with each other** in general?

Not well						Very well
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

b. How well do you think **inmates and correctional staff** get along in general?

Not well						Very well
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

c. How well do you think **correctional staff** get along with each other in general?

Not well						Very well
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

12. a. How would you rate the <u>level of conflict</u> at the Edmonton Institution?

Very low						Very High
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

b. How would you rate the <u>level of conflict</u> at the Edmonton Institution compared to <u>other places</u>?

Very low						Very High
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

FINALLY, WE'D LIKE SOME BACKGROUND INFORMATION.

13. What is your age? (*eg.* 3 6) _____ _____

14. Do you consider yourself to be a member of a visible minority?

Yes 1
No 2

15. How would you describe your ethnic identity? (*eg. German, Ukrainian, Japanese etc.*):

_____

16. What is the ethnic identity of your father's side of the family? (*eg. German, Ukrainian, Japanese etc.*):

_____

17. What is the ethnic identity of your mother's side of the family? (*eg. German, Ukrainian, Japanese etc.*):

_____

18. What were you convicted for?

Robbery or Armed robbery 1
Violent crime (assault) 2
Manslaughter 3
Murder 4
Sex offense 5
Other: **(please specify)**_____ 6

19. How long is your sentence? ____ ____ years

20. How much of your sentence have you completed?

less than 1/3 1
about 1/2 2
about 2/3 3
I will be released within the next 3 months 4

21. What is the total time you have served over your lifetime? ___ ____ years

22. Would you consider yourself to be a career criminal?

Yes 1
No 2

23. a. Would you consider yourself to be a repeat offender?

Definitely Not at all
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

b. Do you see yourself as being a leader among other inmates?

Definitely Not at all
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

c. How influential would you say you are among other inmates?

Very Not at all
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

24. What are your chances of going straight in the future?

Terrible Excellent
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

IF YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS YOU WOULD LIKE TO MAKE, PLEASE FEEL FREE TO DO SO:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Thank-you all for participating in this part of my study.

WE WILL BE PICKING UP YOUR QUESTIONNAIRE AT THE END OF THIS LOCK-UP.

I look forward to meeting with you to discuss the results of the questionnaire some time in the future. Thanks again!!!!!!

APPENDIX F

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA RESEARCH PROJECT

ATTITUDES AND COMMUNICATION IN A CORRECTIONAL SETTING

IF YOU WOULD LIKE HELP WITH ANY OF THESE QUESTIONS, PLEASE LET US KNOW.

Dear Participant:

My name is Jana Grekul. I am a graduate student from the University of Alberta, and I am conducting this study as part of my Masters thesis. The study is about attitudes, communication, and behaviour in a prison - you may have already seen the posters that have been put up throughout the institution.

I would like to thank-you all ahead of time for your cooperation in filling out this questionnaire. It is voluntary, but I would appreciate it if you would participate. I want to ensure you that other inmates, staff, and administration will **NOT** see any of the questionnaires and will not be handling them in any way. Only myself and an assistant will be handing out and collecting the questionnaires. My assistant's name is Colleen Everitt (some of you may know her from her work with the Lifer's Group). **I** am the only one who will look at the completed questionnaires. The questionnaire is **anonymous**; the only marks you need to put on it are circles - your name or handwriting is not necessary when filling out the questionnaire. After the information is gathered, all questionnaires will be **destroyed**.

I will be collecting the completed questionnaires from you at the end of the lock-up during which I have given them to you.

Thanks again for your help and cooperation. It is much appreciated. I encourage you all to fill out your questionnaire. I will be presenting the results from the questionnaires to you at a later date and hope that you will find them very interesting. Thank-you!!!

Yours sincerely,

Jana Grekul

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA RESEARCH PROJECT

ATTITUDES AND COMMUNICATION IN A CORRECTIONAL SETTING

Dear Participant:

My name is Jana Grekul. I am a graduate student from the University of Alberta, and I am conducting this study as part of my Masters thesis. The study is about attitudes, communication, and behaviour in a prison - you may have already seen the posters that have been put up throughout the institution.

I would like to thank-you all ahead of time for your cooperation in filling out this questionnaire. Participation is voluntary, but I would appreciate it if you would participate. The questionnaire is completely confidential and anonymous; I will not know the names of the people filling it out. After the information is gathered, all questionnaires will be destroyed.

With your questionnaire you will find a loonie. Although your time and energy in filling out this questionnaire is worth more to me than a dollar, this is all I can afford. So, it is not meant as payment for your help, but rather as a token of my appreciation.

Once you have completed your questionnaire, please put it in the box at the Main Gate. I would appreciate it if you could complete and return the questionnaire by March 18. If you have any questions or concerns, I can be reached at 475-0828 or by memo to Diane Leitch. Thank-you.

Thanks again for your help and cooperation. It is much appreciated. I will be presenting the results from the questionnaires to you at a later date.

Yours sincerely,

Jana Grekul

APPENDIX G

TABLE 1 How Inmates and Correctional Staff Personally Feel About the Hypothetical Situations

	Inmates		Correctional Staff		
Scenario	**Approve**	**m**	**Approve**	**m**	**% Difference**
Anger Mangt.	90%	5%	99%	0%	9%
Job	**28%**	**6%**	**6%**	**2%**	**22%**
Escape	**61%**	**4%**	**97%**	**0%**	**36%**
Drugs	**52%**	**9%**	**3%**	**0%**	**49%**
Riot	**22%**	**4%**	**100%**	**0%**	**78%**
Knife Fight	**85%**	**4%**	**19%**	**2%**	**66%**

Table 2 Inmate and Correctional Staff Perceptions of Inmate Approval

Scenario	Inmate Perception	Officer Perception	% Difference
Anger Mangt.	**71%**	**55%**	**16%**
Less Chal. job	**61%**	**73%**	**12%**
Escape	**42%**	**33%**	**9%**
Drugs	**75%**	**85%**	**10%**
Riot	**16%**	**24%**	**8%**
Knife fight	**91%**	**94%**	**3%**

TABLE 3A Differences Between Privately Expressed Inmate Attitudes and Inmate Perceptions for each scenario

Scenario	Private Inmate Approval	Inmate Perception of Inmate Approval	Difference Between Private and Perceived Opinions (of inmates)
Anger Mangt.	90%	71%	19%
Less Chal. job	28%	61%	33%
Escape	61%	42%	19%
Drugs	52%	75%	23%
Riot	22%	16%	6%
Knife fight	85%	91%	6%

TABLE 3B Differences Between Privately Expressed Inmate Attitudes and Correctional Officer Perceptions for each scenario

Scenario	Private Inmate Approval	CO Perception of Inmate Approval	Diffs Between Private & Perceived Inmate Opinion
Anger Mangt.	90%	55%	35%
Less Chal. job	28%	73%	45%
Escape	61%	33%	28%
Drugs	52%	85%	33%
Riot	22%	24%	2%
Knife fight	85%	94%	9%

TABLE 4 Inmate and Correctional Staff Perceptions of Correctional Staff Approval

Scenario	Inmate Perception	Officer Perception	% Difference
Anger Mngmt.	83%	58%	25%
Less Chal. job	35%	20%	15%
Escape	75%	91%	16%
Drugs	8%	8%	0%
Riot	80%	94%	14%
Knife fight	23%	20%	15%

TABLE 5A Differences Between Privately Expressed Correctional Officer Attitudes and Correctional Officer Perceptions for each scenario

Scenario	Private CO Approval	CO Perception of CO Approval	Diffs Between Private & Perc. CO Approval
Anger Mngmt.	99%	58%	41%
Less Chal.job	6%	20%	14%
Escape	97%	91%	6%
Drugs	3%	8%	5%
Riot	100%	94%	6%
Knife fight	19%	32%	13%

TABLE 5B Differences Between Privately Expressed Correctional Officer Attitudes and Inmate Perceptions for each scenario

Scenario	Private CO Approval	Inmate Perception of CO Approval	%Dif-ference
Anger Mngmt.	99%	83%	26%
Less Chal. job	6%	35%	29%
Escape	97%	75%	22%
Drugs	3%	8%	5%
Riot	100%	80%	29%
Knife fight	19%	23%	4%

TABLE 6 How Correctional Staff and Inmates Personally Feel About the Hypothetical Situations

	Inmates		Correctional Staff		
Scenario	Approve	m	Approve	m	% Difference
Charge	22%	6%	87%	1%	65%
Defend	82%	6%	56%	3%	26%
No write-up	89%	6%	63%	0%	26%

TABLE 7 Correctional Staff and Inmate Perceptions of Correctional Staff Approval

Scenario	Inmate Perception	Officer Perception	% Difference
Charge	65%	80%	15%
Defend	34%	34%	0%
No write-up	47%	51%	4%

TABLE 8A Differences Between Privately Expressed Correctional Officer Attitudes and Correctional Officer Perceptions for each scenario

Scenario	Private CO Approval	CO Perception of CO Approval	Difference Between Private and Perceived Co Attitudes
Charge	87%	80%	7%
Defend	56%	34%	22%
No write-up	63%	51%	12%

TABLE 8B Differences Between Privately Expressed Correctional Officer Attitudes and Inmate Perceptions for each scenario

Scenario	Private CO Approval	Inmate Perception of CO Approval	Difference Between Private and Perceived CO Attitudes
Charge	87%	65%	22%
Defend	56%	34%	22%
No write-up	63%	47%	16%

TABLE 9 Inmate and Correctional Staff Perceptions of Inmate Approval

Scenario	Inmate Perception	CO Perception	% Difference
Charge	25%	19%	6%
Defend	77%	77%	0%
No write-up	84%	92%	8%

TABLE 10A Differences Between Privately Expressed Inmate Attitudes and Inmate Perceptions of that Approval for each scenario

Scenario	Private Inmate Approval	Inmate Perception of Inmate Approval	% Difference
Charge	22%	25%	3%
Defend	82%	77%	5%
No write-up	89%	84%	5%

TABLE 10B Differences Between Privately Expressed Inmate Attitudes and CO Perceptions of that Approval for each scenario

Scenario	Private Inmate Approval	CO Perception of Inmate Approval	% Difference
Charge	22%	19%	3%
Defend	82%	77%	5%
No write-up	89%	92%	3%